

For Traders Waggon Train in Indian Country

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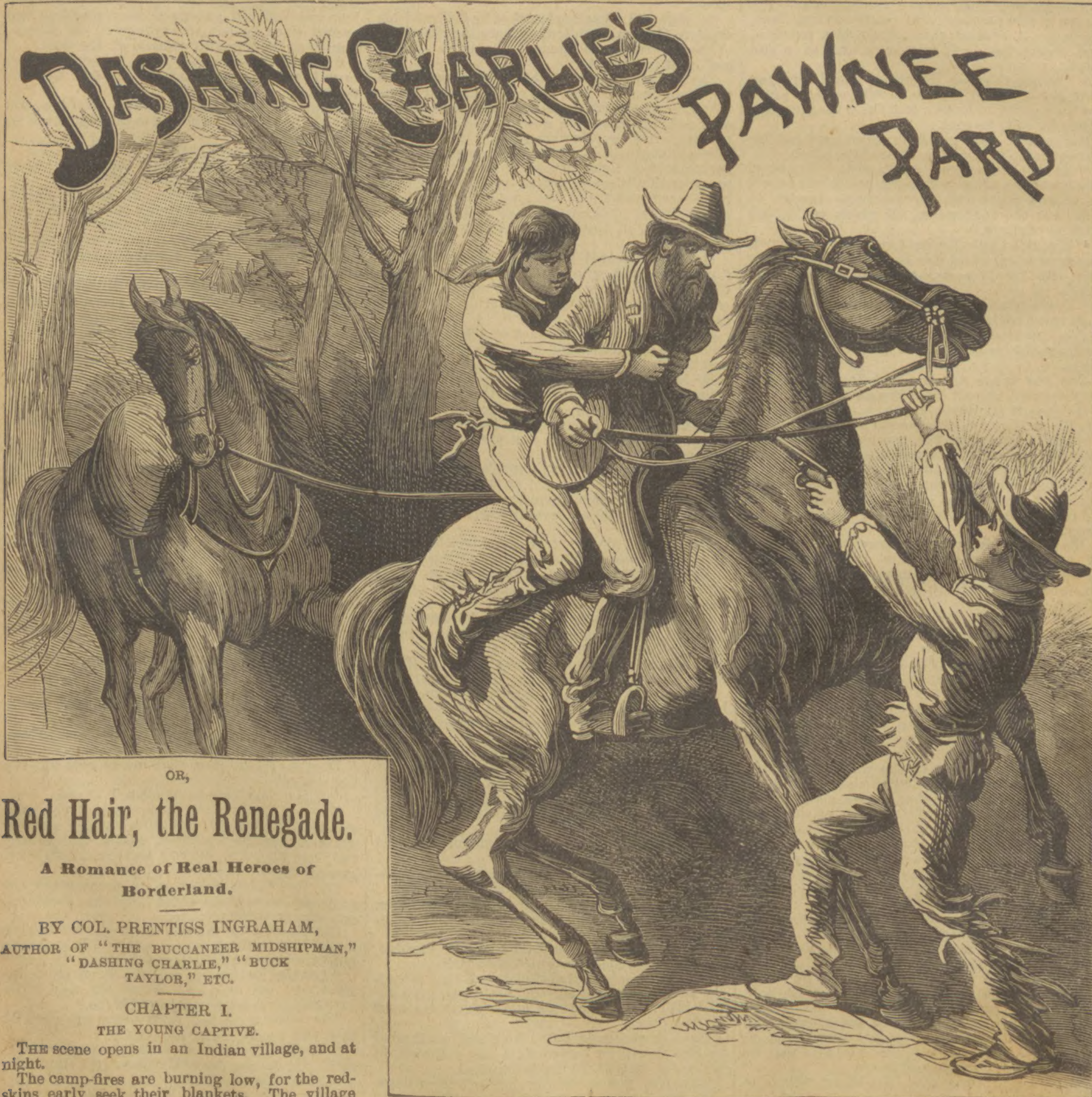
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OR,
Red Hair, the Renegade.

A Romance of Real Heroes of
Borderland.

BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM,
AUTHOR OF "THE BUCCANEER MIDSHIPMAN,"
"DASHING CHARLIE," "BUCK
TAYLOR," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE YOUNG CAPTIVE.

THE scene opens in an Indian village, and at night.

The camp-fires are burning low, for the red-skins early seek their blankets. The village seems in deep repose, and silence rests upon all,

"YOU ARE WANTED, DISMAL DICK!" CRIED DASHING CHARLIE, MENACINGLY.

except now and then the crying of a baby is heard in some tepee, or a dog in sympathy sets up a dismal howl.

Lying in one of the largest tepees, and well located apart from the others, is a mere boy, as the flickering of the camp-fire without reveals.

His face is not that of an Indian, but of a pale-face, and he has numbered but a couple of years since crossing the threshold of his "teens."

His hair is long and almost flaxen in hue, his eyes blue and piercing, and his face is bold and determined to a wonderful degree for one so young.

The boy is half-sitting, half-reclining upon a bear robe, with a red blanket at hand as covering.

The costume he wears is that of the Indian, excepting that a pair of boots stand near and upon them is a slouch hat.

Suddenly the sound of steps reaches his ears, and quickly his head goes down, the blanket is drawn over him, and, to all appearances, he is fast asleep.

Two men approach the tepee, and one of them enters and glances down at the sleeping boy.

These two men are also pale-faces, and a strange coincidence is that they both have long red hair.

The one who looks to see if the boy is asleep is a man of fine physique and really striking face, while he is dressed throughout as a red-skin, and wears the eagle-feather bonnet of a full chief.

"The boy is asleep, Bricktop, and I am glad of it, for he would urge to go with us if he knew we were going to make a trip," said the renegade chief, for such he was.

"Yes, and yet we don't want, and he'll be having comp'ny soon," answered the other.

"He will, if our plan works well. But now, you hasten on after your pard, and I will follow to-morrow night with my warriors—enough to wipe out the fur-traders, all whom we do not wish as captives."

"Yes, but Cap'n Emmett must not be hurt, yer remember, Chief Red Hair, for he is the only one who knows a secret which we must find out."

"I understand, Bricktop; but now be off, and to-morrow night I will follow with my braves."

The man called Bricktop departed, and the chief sought his blankets, in another part of the tepee.

The boy made no sign of being awake, and only aroused himself when the dawn came.

He was, with other whites, a captive among the Sioux; but for some reason he seemed to be a special favorite of the renegade white chief, who had taken him to his own tepee to live, and, after a fashion, the man was kind to him.

The next day the young boy was wholly self-possessed, though he held a big secret in his keeping—one that involved the lives of many people.

He did not show in any way his knowledge of a plot to massacre his uncle's—the fur-trader's—train, from which he had been captured, for a purpose which will be revealed in good time.

This wagon-train, now returning laden down with furs, was the object of the plot of the renegades, while the brave young captive of the Sioux was counterplotting to make his escape and warn the intended victims of their danger.

Bricktop and a companion had gone to meet the train and set the trap, and Red Hair, the Sioux chief, was to follow with his men and spring it.

Night came at last to the waiting boy, and pretending to sleep, he saw the chief fit out for his journey, and knew that he rode away before midnight at the head of hundreds of warriors, all in war-paint and armed for a fight to the death.

"They will think I was sent back for something—I will go!" said the boy, firmly, and he arose from his blankets, rolled them up, got a bag of provisions he had secreted from time to time, secured his arms, the same he had possessed when captured, and crept away in the darkness to the corral of the chief, where the renegade kept his horses.

The best one was selected, saddled and then mounted, and the boy rode away upon his bold venture—his reply to the braves who saw him, that the chief had given him his orders, being wholly satisfactory, for the boy was known to be the Red Hair's especial favorite, and that he was thoroughly trusted all knew.

Far enough away from the Sioux village to avoid meeting stragglers, the youth went, and then camped until the dawn, when he could see to follow the trail of the chief and his red-

handed warriors on their track, to kill and destroy.

At daybreak he was once more in the saddle, determined to carry out his purpose, or to die in the attempt.

CHAPTER II.

A FOE IN THE WAY.

LET me introduce my young hero who is to figure in the pages of this story, founded upon the actual career of Charlie Emmett.

A Kentucky boy, running away from home to escape punishment at home and school, for an act of which he was guiltless, he started upon a pilgrimage to the far West, to find a bachelor uncle, whom he was devoted to, and who, in his visits to his kindred had fired the boy's heart with strange stories of adventure in the Wild West.

This same uncle had given Charlie Emmett a fine horse, a belt of arms, bought him a back-skin suit, and been so generous to him in the way of financial souvenirs, that the boy was well equipped, indeed, for his daring venture to overtake Captain Emmett, who had left but a short while before, to go upon a fur-trading expedition to the wilds of the Upper Missouri River.

So well did Charlie plan that he followed his uncle to Omaha, and finding there that the train of the fur-traders had gone, he engaged a guide, and went in pursuit.

The guide had a pard who planned with him to kill and rob the boy, the result of which was that Charlie turned the tables upon them, killed one, and the other he saw hanged by the fur-traders, after reaching the train.

The adventures of Charlie Emmett in following this trail form the subject of a novel that precedes this one, and his capture from the train by two renegades, and being taken to the village of the Sioux, is told in Half-Dime Library No. 754, written of Dashing Charlie in his earlier years.

Having presented my young hero, whom the fur-traders had given the name of Dashing Charlie, I will now follow him upon his trail, when he escaped so cleverly from the Sioux camp.

He had overheard the plot of the renegades, who little suspected that he constantly watched and listened to catch every word.

He had learned that the fur-traders were to encamp upon Band River at Canyon Spring, upon their return, to arrange for his ransom, for a courier had been sent to Captain Emmett to make terms with him for the return of his nephew.

Instead of keeping faith with Captain Emmett, the renegades had planned to capture him, kill his men and enrich themselves by taking the richly-laden wagons, containing a fortune in furs.

Charlie had plotted to make himself invaluable to the chief, and he had been successful.

He had pretended to love his life in the Sioux village, and so threw all off their guard regarding him.

So well had he planned that he had gotten the plot and was determined to play a bold game to save the fur-traders.

Plodding along on his way after the Sioux band, he suddenly saw before him two warriors.

He knew at once that they were braves who had dropped out from the band for some purpose, for they were returning toward the village.

To fly would cause pursuit, and perhaps the whole band were out too far ahead to be given a warning and his capture must follow.

In his stay of months among the Sioux he had studied the language so diligently that he could speak the tongue fairly well.

The Indians drew rein at sight of him and awaited his coming.

As he rode boldly on he thought with lightning rapidity what he should do.

Drawing nearer he saw that one of the Sioux was bound securely, hands and feet, and to his pony.

Charlie recognized him as a young warrior, the son of the medicine chief of the tribe.

He was known as Red Spirit, and had considerable influence among the people, and but for Red Hair, the white renegade, would have been made a chief.

But the renegade hated him, and challenged by Red Spirit, an Indian duel had followed, in which the white man had triumphed.

Then the young warrior had left the village, and that night an arrow had been fired from some secret point into the tepee of the renegade chief, wounding him severely.

Red Hair said that Red Spirit was the intended assassin, and the doom of death was pronounced against him.

And now Charlie Emmett beheld the Red Spirit a prisoner, securely bound, and a guard with him, an Indian brave who was the foe of the young warrior.

What did it mean, the boy wondered.

"Where would the little white chief go?" asked Snake Eyes, the warrior guard, as the boy halted before him, covered by an arrow in the hands of the Indian.

"I follow the trail of the great Chief Red Hair," was Charlie's answer.

"The Chief Red Hair left the pale-face boy in his tepee, for he did not want children along on the war-path."

"The Little Chief will return with me," and the Indian's face showed that he meant just what he said.

CHAPTER III.

MASTER OF THE SITUATION.

DASHING CHARLIE was in a quandary.

A glance showed him that Snake Eyes's prisoner looked haggard and ill, and that his costume was worn, and his appearance that of one who had suffered greatly in the weeks that had passed since he left the village of his people, hunted as the intended assassin of the chief.

Snake Eyes was a very large, powerful brave, brutal in his nature, and the red-skin bully of the tribe.

Even the chief stood in awe of him, and Charlie knew that he meant to take him back to the village.

But he asked innocently:

"Is the Snake Eyes going to the village, while his comrades go on the war-trail?"

"The Snake Eyes found this coward brave, this squaw brave who tried to kill the great chief, lying in hiding with a broken leg, and the Red Hair bade him take him back to his village and then to come on the trail, for there is time."

Charlie knew that the Snake Eyes hated Red Spirit heartily, because he was more successful than himself in winning the regard of Singing Dove, the most beautiful maiden in the Sioux tribe.

The boy had always liked Red Spirit, better than any other Indian, and the Singing Dove, too, had been kind to him.

Did Snake Eyes take his prisoner back to the village, he would be put to death upon the return of the chief.

Did he obey him and return with him, what his fate, for escaping, might be, he did not know; but he would thereby fail to warn the train of fur-traders of their desperate peril.

The brave boy determined to act at all hazards, and he knew that strategy alone would save him; so he pretended to obey the will of Snake Eyes without hesitation, and said:

"The Snake Eyes is a great brave, and good friend of the Chief Red Hair. I was going to follow the Red Hair, but if the Snake Eyes says I must go back, I will do so."

The warrior seemed pleased to see how readily the boy obeyed him.

He was in hopes that he would not do so, and thus give him an excuse for killing him.

So he said:

"The Little Chief has a big head, and is wise for his years."

"Let him ride in front of the Snake Eyes, when he has given him his weapons."

"Does the Snake Eyes wish me to give him my fire-arms?"

"The Snake Eyes has spoken."

The boy put his hand upon his revolver, and, quicker than a flash it was drawn and a bullet crashed through the brain of the Indian, who fell from his horse, his bow and arrow still in his grasp.

The Red Spirit looked on in amazement, but so firmly secured he could offer no resistance one way or the other.

But Charlie was not one to delay, after having struck a blow for freedom; so he quickly cut the bonds of the young Indian and said:

"Let the Red Spirit take the horse of Snake Eyes, and his weapons and go his way. The Little Chief is his friend, not his foe."

The warrior seemed even more surprised at this, and replied, after a moment:

"The Red Spirit is no coward, no squaw-warrior. He did not fire at the Chief Red Hair, who was victorious over him."

"His horse fell with him and broke his leg, and the Snake Eyes found him in his camp, and made him prisoner."

"The Red Spirit will go his way, and he is the friend of the Little Chief."

The boy held forth his hand, and they parted, the Indian with Snake Eyes' weapons, horse, and his bag of provisions, going his way southward, while Charlie continued on, following the trail of the braves who were going to ambush the fur-traders.

Having met with an adventure that well-nigh had caused him to lose his own life and spoil his plot for the rescue of others, Charlie became more cautious in following the trail of the Indians.

His experience thus far upon the frontier, of little over half a year, had been a severe one.

But he had learned much thereby, and he had made trailing a study.

He had endeavored to learn all he could of the Indians' ways of tracking, their signs and all that they could read in nature.

But yet he dared not cut away from the trail for fear of losing his way and thus missing the fur-traders.

"When however he knew that he was near the trail that they would return upon, and the tracks of the Indian ponies showed that they were going slow preparatory to encamping, he branched off for himself, hoping to cross the line the wagon train must follow, and which he had taken on his way out and could not fail to recognize when he came to it.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FUR-TRADERS.

A WAGON-TRAIN, heavily laden, was pulling along a trail leading toward Omaha, at the close of a long day's march.

The captain of the train, a tall, fine-looking man with long blonde hair and beard, was anxious to reach a certain camping-place on Bend Creek, at a spot known as Canyon Spring.

The train consisted of a number of "prairie schooners," whose once white duck covers showed long exposure to the weather, a couple of ambulances, some army wagons and half a hundred mounted men.

Besides this train of the fur-traders there were a number of discharged soldiers along, and a few hangers-on of frontier posts and forts, going to Omaha, with the traders as a protection upon the long and perilous way.

As they neared the camping-place the order was passed back for the soldiers to go into hiding, the others not belonging properly to the train also taking refuge in the wagons, and soon after hardly over two-score men were visible.

Toward the sunset hour the train reached Canyon Spring, and went into camp, the soldiers and others in hiding not being visible still.

Hardly had the camp-fires been lighted when a horseman suddenly appeared, and at sight of him came a wild cheer of welcome from the trainmen.

It was Charlie Emmett, the boy captive of the Sioux, and the greeting the tall man with long blonde hair and beard gave him, was as affectionate as the greeting a father would bestow upon a son.

"Uncle, I have no time now to talk about myself, for I wish to tell you that I escaped from the Sioux camp, and there are now camped not very far from you several hundred horses under the renegade chief Red Hair, who, with two whites, has plotted to lead you into ambush."

"One of the renegades will visit your camp to-night to arrange a price with you for my return; but it is all a blind to betray you."

"My brave boy, I happen to suspect this, for a courier came into our camp who was none other than one of the renegade dwellers among the Sioux."

"He had a spy in our camp, with whom he entered into a plot, and that man we tried and hanged."

"The other was to meet us here, and arrange to ransom you for a certain sum."

"He is the man who captured me, uncle, he and his pard, and they are as treacherous as snakes."

"But he must not see me, so I will hide, and when he is gone will tell you where the Sioux are lying in wait to get you into an ambush."

"Bravo for you, Charlie!"

"It is just like you, my brave boy, to risk your life to save us."

"But, as you say, you must not be seen, and when I have seen this courier and pretended to arrange with him, he will find that he has caught himself and his Sioux allies in the trap he set for us."

A short while after, Dashing Charlie was in hiding, and a guard led up to the camp-fire of

Captain Emmett a man who had just arrived at the camp, and asked for the captain.

It was the courier who had overtaken the train on the trail to the trading-post, and told of the capture of Charlie, and how he had been deputized to treat for his release.

The renegade courier little dreamed of the tragic end of his spy pard, and looked about for him in vain.

He was greeted pleasantly by Captain Emmett, who said:

"Well, you see we have kept our word, to camp here upon our return."

"So I see, cap'n."

"What news do you bring of my nephew?"

"I left him safe and well in the Sioux village, and he appears to like the wild life he leads, though he did say he would be most happy if he could see you again soon."

"Well, the sum agreed upon was one thousand in cash, I believe?"

"Yes, sir, cap'n."

"Bring my boy to this camp to-morrow afternoon, or as soon after as you can get him here, and I will pay into your hands the amount agreed upon between us."

"Honest Injun, cap'n? Yer don't mean ter nab ther boy, hang me, and keep the thousand?"

"If you knew me, you would not hold such a vile suspicion against me," was the indignant reply.

"You have never heard, and never will, that 'Old Kentucky,' as the boys call me, ever did a mean action."

"Now will you have some supper?"

"No, cap'n, thank ye, I'll be a-goin', fer I has considerable of a ride."

"To-morrow night I'll be on hand with ther boy, without fail," and the man left the camp-fire, mounted his horse and as he rode away muttered to himself:

"To-morrow night will never come for this camp, Cap'n Emmett, and as my prisoner I can force from you the secret you hold."

"Yes, to-night must tell the story."

CHAPTER V.

THE CAPTAIN'S CONFESSION.

THE sun rose the following morning upon a pitiful scene in the fur-traders' camp.

But for the warning of Dashing Charlie the scene would have been far more pitiful for those in the encampment.

The courier to the fur-traders had kept his word that the blow should be struck, and it fell heavily, for hundreds of red warriors, under the leadership of white renegades had crept up to surprise, as they believed, and overwhelm their foes.

Instead, their foes had surprised them, for when their war-cries resounded in the darkness, they were the last utterances of many a red-skin brave.

Sheets of flame shot forth from well protected men, and the first fire was withering and terrible.

Then came the rattle of revolvers at close range, the answering war-cries of the fur-traders and the cheers of the soldiers, and the fight was won with one rush that was irresistible.

And so it was that the sun peered over the hill-tops down upon a sickening scene.

Here and there lay a trader or a soldier dead, and kindly cared for by their comrades were others who were wounded.

Not a wounded Indian was to be seen, but the dead lay thick about.

Two whites were among the dead too, one being the courier who had planned the plot, the other a man who had long lived among the Indians, a fugitive from justice, until he had in fact become almost a red-skin in appearance.

But Bricktop had escaped, and Red Hair the great chief had also gotten away in spite of the efforts of the fur-traders to capture him.

But camp-fires were soon built, and the cooks were busy preparing breakfast, while the others collected the dead and cared for the wounded.

Graves were dug, but apart, and red-skin as pale-face were laid away to their last sleep.

It was noon before the train was ready to pull out on its way, and then the guide, Girard, and Pawnee Pete, an Indian scout, had reported that the defeated Sioux were far away, going in terror back to their village.

Some of the stock had been killed and wounded also, but others were put in the wagons in their place, and if slightly crippled there was too much rejoicing in the train at their escape from what would have been a surprise and massacre, for the men to mind what they looked upon as trifles.

When the train was once more upon its way three of the party rode to the front.

They were Captain Emmett, his partner Doctor Dick Chalmers and Dashing Charlie.

The face of the youth wore a proud look, though he in vain tried to appear unconcerned after his deed of heroism.

Captain Emmett was a splendid specimen of manhood, cool as an icicle, a good commander and a thorough plainsman.

He was respected by his men, and was making money in his dangerous calling.

He had two partners in his enterprise, one of whom, Dan Lamont, acted as clerk, paymaster and sutler, and did not interfere with the rest of the affairs, leaving all to the management of Captain Emmett.

The other, Doctor Dick Chalmers, had been an army surgeon, but had resigned and become Captain Emmett's partner.

He was a dashing fellow, whole-souled, daring, and as brave as men can be and he and the captain were firm friends as well as partners.

"Well, Charlie, I owe you my scalp, and when you wish to take it let me know, for its yours on demand," said Doc Chalmers as the three named rode to the front of the train, for Pawnee Pete was out scouting on the flanks and Girard the guide was ahead, so there was no danger of an ambush.

"You forget, doctor, that I was helping myself as well as the train," said Charlie modestly.

"Oh yes, but you would never have been fool enough to risk an escape as you did, had you not known Chief Red Hair was going to get us into a trap."

"You are as plucky as they make 'em, Charlie, and what you have done will make you a name that will be known from one end of this border to the other."

"Am I not right, Emmett?"

"I think you are, Doc, and Charlie will deserve all that can be said of him."

"Yes, he's a chip of the old block," laughed Doc Chalmers, while Captain Emmett said:

"Well, it is over now, and we do owe it to Charlie, into whose short career on the plains has been thrown more of peril and adventure than often falls to a man in a lifetime."

"But, Doc, you remember, when away back at the trading-post, I told you I had a plan in view, and if we could not get Charlie out of the hands of the renegades by a ransom, that I would do so in another way?"

"Yes, I remember."

"Well, we have Charlie with us safe and sound now, and there is no need to risk life and limb for him: but he tells me there are a number of white women and children captives among the Sioux and to rescue them will be the basis upon which I will act, and get a force."

"By all means, Emmett."

"But I have another reason as well."

"Out with it then."

"It is to be a secret between we three."

"Certainly."

"I know just where there is a gold mine in the Indian country," was Captain Emmett's confession in a low tone, and both Doc Chalmers and Dashing Charlie seemed surprised.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PLOT FOR GOLD.

"You see," continued Captain Emmett, when he had told what the secret he bore was, and marked the surprise of Doctor Chalmers, or Doc as he was generally called:

"I once had it in my power to do a service to a man whom, though I knew was a great rascal, was yet the under dog in the fight at the time I took up for him."

"He got his death-wound, and died in my cabin, after I had served him as kindly as I knew how."

"Which means a great deal," the doctor said.

"I did not slight him because he was a desperado, and, of course, looked for no return outside of the consciousness of having done my duty."

"I wish more men had a conscience like you, Emmett."

"Say, Doc, what is the cause of your plastering on taffy as you do this morning, for really I cannot see that you need any service from me now," said Captain Emmett with a smile.

"I wish to divvy in the gold mine you know."

"I see, but it is to be found yet."

"This man, Nick Nye was his name, had been a miner, and turned renegade against his own people, so that he could prospect for gold in the Indian country."

"At last, after years of search, he struck it rich, and having gotten a snug sum of dust together he came to the settlement.

"Then it was that he got into the row that was fatal to him.

"It seems that he had a mother and sisters, and wishing to atone for his past desertion of them and neglect, he told me of the mine, giving me a half-interest if I would go to it and work it, giving to his kinsfolk the other half.

"I pledged myself to do so as well as I could, for, as I said, the mine is in the Indian country.

"I have the maps of the locality, trails to get there and full particulars at my cabin in Omaha, and it is my intention to make the attempt upon my return, to reach the mine."

"Good for you, captain," cried Doc Chalmers.

"And we go with you, Uncle Emmett," remarked Charlie.

"Yes, indeed, for I shall need a surgeon, yourself, Doc, and an *aide-de-camp*, which latter position you can fill most creditably, Charlie."

"I'm awful glad, uncle."

"You see I intend to raise quite a force, and nominally the reason for going against the Sioux will be the rescue of these poor captive women and children that Charlie tells us about.

"Of course that will be the main object for all, and our first duty; but I shall take advantage of this to locate the mine and see if it pans out as rich as I have reason to believe.

"At my own expense I shall enlist say a hundred men, well armed and mounted, and under so much pay per month, and call for others who can afford to volunteer.

"The commandant at Omaha will furnish us with rations, and will give us a strong support of soldiers to back us, as will the other fort commanders, so that we can invade the Sioux country, and my force make a dash upon the village of Red Hair to rescue the captives.

"Once in the country and with the Sioux pushed to a retreat, we can go to the gold mine, and get away before the Indians learn of our small force and return to attack us."

"The plan is a perfect one, Captain Emmett."

"I think so, Doc."

"But I must share your expense in the affair."

"If you wish, for you and Charlie shall share what I gain from the mine."

"Ah, I would not wish this, Emmett."

"Nor would I, uncle."

"But it shall be so all the same."

"Now you know my secret, and this reason for our going into the Indian country must be kept between us."

"It shall be, Emmett."

"I'll never tell," added Charlie.

"No, for a boy you are as closed-mouthed as any one I know, Charlie," his uncle said with a smile, and Charlie accepted the words as a compliment.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE TRAIL OF RESCUE.

THE fur-traders' train pulled into Omaha one afternoon amid the wild cheers of the then very rough citizens of that place.

All manner of reports had been in circulation that the train had been massacred, not one man escaping, and again it was said that the Sioux had them corraled in the mountains with no hope of succor.

But the lie was given to these rumors, originating no one knew how or where, when "Emmett's Train" came into Omaha and sought its accustomed camping-place.

Men gathered about the returned traders, and in many cases comrades asked for men not to be found, and the reply to inquiries was that they had "camped on the trail on their last long bivouac."

The story of the long expedition was told and men grasped the hands of the returned heroes and gave them warm welcome back from the perils they had known.

A number of men remembered the fearless-faced boy who had flitted through Omaha on his uncle's trail, and undaunted, when he found him gone, had followed after him under the guidance of Limber Joe.

Then he came back grown rougher and tougher, burned as brown as an Indian and with lots of hard experience to his credit: a boy who had proven himself a man in deeds if not in years, in a dozen or more scenes of deadly dangers, and one who had registered himself as

"Dashing Charlie the Boy Hero," in the eyes of old plainsmen.

His story was soon told, not by himself, but by others, and all admitted that he was a worthy nephew of "Cap Emmett," or "Old Kentuck," as the captain was more frequently called, though he was yet a young man, only across the threshold of thirty five.

As he met the various men at Omaha, of whose record he knew something, Captain Emmett told those whom he knew he could rely upon that he had work ahead for them.

"It is a trail that may end in the grave for all of us, but the cause is a good one, and the pay above the average, with horses and rations furnished.

"I want only men who do not fear to die if called upon to back me to the bitter end, for those kind make the expedition doubly safe.

"I shall need you within a couple of weeks, and keep dark about going with me."

This was about what he said to all of them, and, counting many of his own band who had returned with him, he had within a few days a hundred brave fellows enrolled for the work in view.

Captain Emmett also visited the commandant of the military forces in that part of the country, then having his headquarters at Omaha, and Dashing Charlie accompanied him to tell his story of his captivity among the Sioux.

"So you were really kidnapped from the train, and by white men?" said Colonel Sibley.

"Yes, sir. I was met by two men who told me they were couriers from you with orders for Captain Emmett."

"I was hunting on ahead while Girard the guide was searching for an easy trail over a ridge, and not suspecting the men, I was captured very easily," answered Charlie.

"Hardly so easily when I learn that you wounded one of them."

"Not seriously, sir, though I tried to kill him."

"They were renegades and took me to the Sioux camp, where Red Hair, the head chief, also a white man, gave me quarters in his tepee, and so it was that I could overhear his plot against the fur-traders' train."

"And took advantage of it to escape and save the train, for which you shall have full credit, my young friend."

"But now tell me all about these white captives held in the Sioux village, who they are and from where taken."

Charlie obeyed, telling all that he knew about the captives, their number and all that he had been able to discover.

"Now about these renegade men?" asked Colonel Sibley.

"There was Red Hair, the chief, sir, and two men whom he had as allies, for they were always in council with him."

"There were several more, but they were of no more importance than a common brave."

"They were not captives."

"No, sir, or they did not appear to be, as they were very much like the Indians in everything, and I am sure would fight with them if the village was attacked."

"Well, Charlie, you have done well, and as you seem to have kept your eyes and ears both open while you were a prisoner in the Indian village, and have shown yourself to possess great courage, coolness and determination, you will be invaluable on this expedition as a guide, for I shall support your uncle's force with a couple of light guns, two companies of cavalry and three of mounted infantry."

"When will you be ready to start, Captain Emmett?"

"In one week, Colonel Sibley," was the response.

And in just one week the force departed for the Indian country.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHAT CHARLIE OVERHEARD.

COLONEL SIBLEY sent his soldiers simply as a support to Captain Emmett and his Rescuers, as they were called.

He had no orders to invade the Sioux country, and his duty was to protect the settlers and others upon the frontier.

Of course he had not men enough for a general march through the Sioux retreats; but with his own force of two hundred and fifty as a support to Captain Emmett, and two other columns marching from Fort Blank and Fort Supply, all three going toward a common center, it would give the Rescuers a chance to retreat in three different directions for refuge,

and the whole number of soldiers, half a thousand gallant men, could reach an indicated point within a day's march at furthest.

Thus aided by the military, Captain Emmett felt confident he could make a dash into the Indian village of Red Hair, strike it at night, drive the red-skins to their retreats, rescue the captives and retreat to the support of the soldiers, when the Indians, who would pursue, could be beaten in a battle and forced to retreat to the fastnesses of the mountains many miles from their former encampment.

Once they began this retreat Captain Emmett's intention was to follow them with his force and strike the gold mine he held the knowledge of.

Such was his plan, and all was arranged without a hitch.

Of course Charlie went along, as his uncle's *aide*, and he was mounted upon the splendid black horse he had captured from Chief Red Hair's corral, and which he had named "Midnight."

He was better equipped for the trip than anyone in the outfit too, for Charlie left nothing undone for his use and comfort on the expedition.

Doctor Dick Chalmers was along as surgeon, and messed with Captain Emmett and Charlie, Whitewash, a negro as black as ink, being the cook and valet of the trio.

The "Rescuers" started a day ahead of the soldiers, and the trails that each of the marching column were to take, was mapped out and known to the others, and competent couriers, who knew the country well, went with the commands so that a constant communication could be kept up between them if necessary.

Pawnee Pete, Captain Emmett's faithful Indian scout, went with him of course, and besides there was Girard the guide and a new man known as Scalper Sam, a man who had come up from Texas with strong recommendations from army officers there as a guide, interpreter and scout.

It was said that he had once been cruelly wronged by the red-skins, just how no one knew, and he was too taciturn to talk about himself or anything else, and answered no questions.

But his bridle was made of Indian scalps and he wore a string of a score or more hanging to his belt, for Scalper Sam always scalped his dead.

He had been sent to Captain Emmett by Colonel Sibley as a good man to take along, and so had been given a position as scout, for he said he had been through the country years before when a Sioux captive.

It was while Charlie was making some purchases in a store that he overheard the following conversation between two men neither of whom he could see.

Charlie had taken a seat to try on a pair of boots, and was half hidden by the boxes and goods piled up about him.

Two men met in the narrow space near him, and upon the other side of some boxes, and one said:

"What, not gone yet?"

"I'm off to-night," came the answer.

"You must push, for these fellows are in earnest, and will travel fast."

"I'll get there, never fear, and we'll be ready for 'em."

"Tell him all, how many and trails to be taken."

"I'll do it."

"Say I'll come with the command."

"Yes."

"Good-by."

"Good-by until we meet again."

The men parted, and Charlie tried to get a view of who they were.

But before he could pull his boots on they had either left the large store, or were mingled with the crowd, for half a hundred people were there, making purchases.

But Charlie was slightly worried at what he heard, and going to his uncle, told him just what had been said.

"I am sorry you could not catch a glimpse of the men, Charlie; but then the words may not refer to us, though it would seem so."

"Who were in the store that you knew?"

"There were a number there; but I was hemmed in by the boxes, in one corner, where the clerk told me to go and pick out a pair of boots, and these two men passed near, and the place was so full of goods, before I got around where the others were they had joined the crowd about the long counters."

"Suppose you make a circuit of the camps, and see who leaves on the northwest trails."

"I'll tell you, uncle. Let Pawnee Pete go ahead with me, for you won't need him for several days, and if the man does leave to warn the Sioux, as the words implied I overheard, he will take the direct trail."

"Yes, and then?"

"Well, sir, Pawnee Pete and I can head him off, and see just who he is."

"That is so, Charlie, and you can go."

"When did he say he would start?"

"To-night."

"Well, take Pawnee Pete and go out on the fort trail, then flank around to the one this man must take."

"Camp on it and bag the fellow, but don't kill him."

"I understand, sir," was the answer, and an hour after Charlie and Pawnee Pete had started upon their mission.

CHAPTER IX.

CHARLIE AND THE PAWNEE.

PAWNEE PETE was as true as steel to the pale-faces.

His natural foes had been the whites, but in time the Pawnees learned that they were not such cruel enemies as were the Sioux, and so they buried the tomahawk and ceased to go on the trail of the white men.

Then the Pawnees added their former hatred of the pale-faces to that they held for the Sioux, with the result that it was always war to the scalping-knife between the two tribes.

Pawnee Pete was a bright young warrior. There was no better trailer in the tribe, nor a braver man.

He had won the admiration and regard of the whites, and especially of Captain Emmett, who had befriended him in many ways, he and his people.

The Pawnee had gone on two former expeditions with the fur-traders, and was to be trusted, they knew.

He had gone with the party who had taken the back trail to rescue Dashing Charlie, and the boy's splendid pluck had won the unbounded admiration of the Indian scout.

When sent by Captain Emmett upon the trail of the kidnappers of Charlie, the young Pawnee had tracked them to the village of Chief Red Hair.

When told by Charlie that the two were to start upon a mission ahead of the Rescuers, Pawnee Pete was pleased and showed it, and at once went to get ready for the trail.

Captain Emmett had given him a fine horse, and a new outfit from head to foot, and he was as proud as a boy with his first pants.

The two mounted their horses and started toward the fort up the river several miles, and Pawnee Pete was let into the secret of just what was to be done.

He spoke English after a fashion of his own, and made himself understood, while he comprehended perfectly all that was said to him.

"You know now, Pawnee Pete, just what I wish to do?" said Charlie, after he had explained all.

"Me know: yes—um! Head off man; don't know who."

"That is the work before us."

"Don't know where he go?"

"No."

"Only guess?"

"Yes."

"Hope find him."

"Indeed I do."

"We go over to Sioux trail."

"That is it."

"Man leave when dark?"

"Yes, to-night he said."

"We find him if he comes along trail."

"I hope so; but how are we to catch him?"

"Very good."

"My uncle says we must not harm him?"

"No kill?"

"Oh, no; only capture him."

"Very easy—um!"

"But, how?"

"Heap woods there."

"On the trail?"

"Yes, spread over trail, and Pawnee Pete be hid."

"Ah! we will get into a tree where he cannot see us and halt him—that your idea?"

"No; Charlie stay on ground to kill horse, or catch if horse run."

"And you?"

"Pawnee Pete get in tree and be hid."

"I don't exactly understand."

"Pawnee Pete fly down on man."

"Ah! Pete you are a bird indeed, a daisy and a dandy as well."

"Pete glad," was the answer, and he smiled, for he knew that he was being highly complimented by the boy scout.

So on they went, Dashing Charlie quite happy now at having found out a way through Pawnee Pete of capturing the man they hoped to find without having to kill him.

If they made a mistake and captured the wrong man, then they would have to get out of it as best they could, and Charley was very sure he would have a fight on his hands, from what he knew of the people of that country.

It had been agreed that Captain Emmett should tell no one, other than Doctor Chalmers, where Charlie and Pete had really gone, for if there was a spy with the command it would give the secret away were it known that some one was suspected.

"I will say that you and Pete go to the fort to await the last orders from Colonel Sibley, and will then follow," Captain Emmett had told Charlie, and this satisfied him.

When the Captain told Doctor Chalmers that night what his nephew had overheard, and whither he and Pawnee Pete had gone, he asked:

"Now, what do you think of it, Doc?"

"That boy has a great head on him, Emmett, and he is not wrong in his surmise that it means we have a spy to go along with us, and a man to warn Chief Red Hair in advance starts to-night."

"You really think so?"

"Beyond all doubt it is the case."

"But who is the man, for my men are all picked?"

"True, and I would be willing to vouch for each one of them, as I know them; but the renegades among the Indians certainly have spies here, as we know, and there must be a black sheep in our flock."

"Well, we will know who it is when Charlie corrals his man," was Captain Emmett's response.

And it was upon the following morning that the Rescuers mounted and rode away upon the trail to the land of the Sioux.

CHAPTER X.

PETE KNOWS IT ALL.

PAWNEE PETE was at home on the trail, and a plot to capture an enemy was just to his liking.

Where strategy, cunning and boldness were needed the Pawnee was the man to select for the work.

He grasped a situation quickly, seldom got rattled and was one to take instant advantage where it came up in his favor.

Dashing Charlie Emmett could not have had a more apt teacher, or been coached in plains-craft by one who better knew how to do it.

The boy had his own ideas, but he yielded to those of Pawnee Pete, who he was well aware knew just what he was about.

He was willing to be guided by the Indian, and if they could capture the man whom Charlie hoped to find it would be a great thing for them, he well knew.

They rode rapidly on for miles, the Indian flanking to the left and showing that he knew every foot of the country.

Darkness overtook them many miles from Omaha, but Pawnee Pete had made a suggestion which Charlie was quick to follow.

"We have long start."

"Yes."

"Much hours."

"True, if he does not leave until night we will be six hours ahead of him."

"We ride fast, make more."

"True."

"He ride slow, have long trail."

"Yes."

"He ride late, camp two hours, come on and camp two hour after sunrise."

"You know it all, Pete."

"We go where he make second camp."

"You think you can strike it?"

"Yes, know."

"All right, push ahead."

"We have long rest when stop for horses."

"He no see trail at night."

"You are right there."

"We catch him easy."

"All right."

So on they went until many a mile had been gone over.

At last they came to a place where Pawnee Pete turned from the trail.

Charlie at once asked the reason of this.

"Him come on, he get here daytime and see trail."

"We go all round."

"Correct you are, chief of the Pawnee—as you will be some day," and Charlie was guessing at his last utterances.

Though night, Pawnee Pete was not at a loss to find his way.

He went as unerringly as a wild beast would to water, and after miles had been gone over, again came to the trail they had left.

The country was wild here, seamed with canyons, and the trail ran through very heavy timber.

At times the trail led into a timber-grown canyon, and right here Pawnee Pete halted.

The tired horses were watered and staked out, a fire was built among the rocks, and Pawnee Pete, whose life among the pale-faces had made him an excellent cook, prepared supper, of antelope steak, roast potatoes, crackers, bacon and coffee.

They ate it with a relish, and spreading their blankets, after putting out the fire, Pete said:

"Go sleep now, no Sioux, no nobody near—wake up plenty time."

With perfect confidence that Pawnee Pete did "know it all," Charlie wrapped himself in his blankets and was asleep in a minute of time.

Pete also sunk into slumber; but it was the sleep of a watch-dog, for his senses were not so deadened but that he heard every sound.

He awoke before dawn, built a fire and got breakfast.

"Eat when dark, he no see smoke," he explained.

Charlie was willing and then the fire was put out, the traps rolled up and they prepared for the work ahead of them.

As the day began to dawn, Charley saw that the spot had been splendidly chosen.

Pawnee Pete evidently knew just where he was going when he went to the camp.

It was just off the Sioux trail, as the one to the upper country was called, and in a canyon branching off from it they had camped.

There was water and grass in plenty there, and the canyon through which wound the trail was wooded with massive trees, with far outstretching branches.

"See, Charlie stay there behind rock with mule," said Pete, pointing to a spot twenty feet from the trail.

"Be ready to kill horse, Pete say so."

"Yes, and you?"

"Pawnee Pete sit up there," and he pointed to a limb overhanging the trail.

Then he continued:

"Man come so, Pete fly down from tree on back and hold on tight."

"Yes."

"Charlie kill horse if run, but if not run, he come and take man gun and knife, then tie him heap tight."

"Charlie know?"

"Ah yes, I understand; but if you are not careful when you drop out of that tree you'll break your neck, Pete."

"No, Pete like panther, very quick."

"He know."

"I'll bet you do."

"All ready now, no talk more," and with this Pete placed Charlie in position and then climbed up to his roost.

CHAPTER XI.

DISMAL DICK.

THE spot selected for Charlie was a huge rock, overgrown with scrub bushes, and among which the boy located himself.

It commanded by peering through the bushes, a view down the trail for an eighth of a mile.

As the canyon's sides widened out then, it did not look like a place of ambush, and any one coming along the trail at that point would hardly expect to meet a foe there when there were so many better places for ambush.

Not fifty feet from Charlie's position the trail ran, and only a dozen feet down it, grew the large tree with the massive branches, low spreading and drooping, where Pawnee Pete had taken shelter.

To any one even looking into the tree, the foliage was so dense the Indian could not be seen, and Charlie peered from his place of concealment in a vain effort to discover the Pawnee.

Pete made himself perfectly comfortable there and was as patient as a cat at a mouse hole.

Charlie too had learned patience to a wonderful degree, during his stay among the Indians, for it is a virtue they acquire by will and determination.

So the thought of waiting hours there did not disturb him in the least.

He knew that the Rescuers would not break

camp at Omaha until sometime after dawn, and with a number of pack-animals and extra horses along they would not reach the place where they then were lying in wait before noon the following day, if then.

Untrammelled as he would doubtless be, the man they waited for would, as Pawnee Pete had said, arrive, even if he rode all night without camping, very soon.

If he had camped then it would perhaps be a long wait.

The Pawnee had examined the trail most carefully, and had told Charlie that not any one had passed within the last forty-eight hours.

Thus the time passed on and Charlie was beginning to think of his far-away home in Kentucky and wonder what his kinsfolk and companions there in the country school would think of him if they knew of all his adventures.

He was aware that his uncle had written a long letter home from Omaha, telling everything, and he could not but feel proud that he had made a record for himself that would make the home folks open their eyes with wonder.

So his thoughts were running upon home, when he heard a low:

"Hist!"

He knew that it came from the Pawnee and he riveted his eyes upon the spot where the trail wound into the canyon nearly a quarter of a mile away.

At once his gaze fell upon a horseman, who was riding at a walk, his rein hanging loose, and he appeared as he drew nearer, to have ridden all night.

He was mounted upon a large roan, and as the horse came on Charlie made a discovery.

The man was either very drunk, or he was asleep, for he reeled in his saddle from time to time, catching himself from falling by a sudden jerk.

He came on, the horse with his head down taking it coolly, and the rider evidently unconscious of his moving—whether from drink or sleep Charlie did not know.

"If he is asleep Pawnee Pete will wake him up with a nightmare, and if he's drunk then he'll sober him, or give him the jim-jams," muttered Charlie, who now eyed the stranger closely.

He saw that he was dressed in frontier garb, wore a belt of arms, and a rifle, slung to a strap, hung from his saddle-horn.

Behind the horse which he rode Charlie now saw a led animal, a fair match for the one he was riding.

Upon the back of this second horse was a heavy pack, and this proved that the man was not out for a short hunt, but on a long trail.

Drawing nearer Charlie saw that he was heavily bearded, wore his hair long, and that he had seen him often in Omaha he was well aware.

"Yes, I am not mistaken; it is the man whom they call Dismal Dick, on account of his woe-begone face, and they say he is a great rascal, too.

"Now to see Pawnee Pete wake him up," and the boy enjoyed the situation in which Dismal Dick had ridden, with youthful gusto.

CHAPTER XII.

FOR FUTURE REFERENCE.

ON came the man, the horses in a swinging walk, unurged by spur or voice, and moving with the pace of animals that had been going steadily along for hours.

Under the tree they passed, and, a moment after, down from a limb nearly ten feet above the head of the rider, dropped the lithe form of the Indian.

He landed directly upon the back of the horse, sliding down the man's back as he did so, and with his arms clasping him in a deathlike grip.

The horse gave a snort of terror and made a bound into the air, striving to unseat his rider and the Indian, while Dismal Dick uttered a wild yell as though he believed himself in the clutches of the Evil One from Hades.

But the horse did not unseat his rider, or the Indian.

Pawnee Pete took good care of this, and with his grip upon the man also held himself firmly upon the back of the animal.

The led horse had dragged back upon the lead rope, partly checking the other's forward spring and for an instant it seemed as though both animals would go down with their riders.

Then did Charlie recall himself to action and remember that he too had a duty to perform.

With a bound Charlie Emmett had leaped the trail, and in a moment more had grasped the rein of the frightened horse, and while he held his revolver in the other hand, cried:

"You are wanted, Dismal Dick!" cried Dashing Charlie menacingly.

The Indian still retaining his vise-like grip about the man, said:

"Take shooters, Charlie, heap soon!"

Charlie obeyed, quickly unbuckling the belt of arms, for the horses were quiet now, when they realized that it was not a panther that had sprung from the tree.

"What in thunder does yer mean, kid?" now yelled Dismal Dick, regaining his nerve in part, and he spoke in the deep sepulchral tone which suited his face so well. He was well named indeed, for a more dismal-looking countenance than his was never reflected in a mirror.

It was not a sad face, but a truly dismal one, as melancholy as an owl's.

"I'm on your trail, Dismal Dick, and as I said before, you are wanted."

"Who wants me?"

"I'll tell you as soon as I have got you roped," answered Charlie, catching on rapidly in the border way of expressing himself.

He set to work then to tie him firmly, and did it with an ease and dispatch that pleased Pawnee Pete, who never let go his hold upon his prisoner until he was securely bound.

Then he slipped from the back of the horse to the ground and said:

"Done heap easy."

"Yes, Pete, you are right. You did that first-class."

"And you'll both suffer for this, curse you!" growled Dismal Dick.

"I'm open for a fight, Dismal Dick, if I have wronged you, and you won't accept my apology."

"Darn yer apology, kid."

"You is gittin' awful fresh jist 'cause yer has got out o' a leetle trouble."

"All right, Dismal; you'll find I am fresh enough to hold on to you."

"What fer?"

"I have a suspicion that you are not all right."

"I is as squar' as they make 'em."

"I don't agree with you, and I am going to find out."

"See here, boy; does yer s'pose I intends ter allow a kid like you ter bully me?"

"I do not see how you can help yourself, Dismal."

"You has got me foul, I admits; but it were that cussed Injun did it, and I'll hev his scalp some day fer it."

"You will be a mighty old man, Dismal Dick, before you get Pawnee Pete's scalp."

"What does yer want with me, I asks yer?"

"Where were you going when we called the halt on you?"

"It's none o' yer bizziness."

"Well, I shall make it my business, Dismal, and I will know what I wish without the asking."

"How kin yer?"

"I'll show you."

"Pete, shall we go on, or wait here?"

"Wait here; heap better."

"All right; we will go down to our camp in the canyon."

Down to the camp in the canyon the Indian and Charlie led the horses, Dismal Dick still in his saddle.

His eyes were bloodshot, and there was a very strong flavor of bad rum about him.

That he had been on a debauch before leaving, and was very drunk when he left, Charlie had no doubt.

He had a flask along, with a couple of drinks left in it, and Charlie said:

"Well, Dismal, you made a night of it, that is certain, and now we'll spend the day together."

"What do you want with me?" and the man's situation had sobered him perfectly now.

"We'll have dinner first and then I'll tell you."

"Waiting for you has made me hungry."

This proposition to eat pleased Pawnee Pete, and he staked out the horses after unsaddling them, while Charlie looked to the prisoner.

Dismal Dick was in no humor to eat, but drank a tin-cup of coffee, and afterward again asked:

"Now, what does yer want with me, boy?"

"I wish to know where you were going."

"To the mountains to trap fer pelts."

"Going alone up into the dangerous Sioux country, Dismal?"

"I hain't easily scared, boy."

"Well, you will be when I tell you that I overheard what you said to your pard yesterday, when you met him in Tanner's store, about going to warn Chief Red Hair of the coming of Captain Emmett's Rescuers."

"Yes, Dismal Dick, I shall hold you for future reference."

CHAPTER XIII.

DASHING CHARLIE'S DISCOVERY.

THE words of Charlie Emmett were fired at random, but they hit dead center.

The man gave a startled exclamation in spite of himself, and turned deadly pale.

He was still nervous from the amount of liquor he had drank.

Seeing his advantage, Charlie said:

"So you got loaded before you started, and yet you had sense enough to pull out ahead of the Rescuers as you feared you would be too late with your warning."

"What in eternal thunder does yer mean, boy?"

"I mean that your pard comes on with the command."

"I doesn't understand yer."

"Don't you?"

"No."

"Well, I'll explain by saying that you are on your way to warn Chief Red Hair, the renegade leader of the Sioux, that a party of Rescuers are coming to his village."

"It's a lie! a lie!" yelled the man.

"You intended to tell him that they were on their way, so he could prepare an ambush for them and wipe them out."

"Yer lies, boy, yer lies!"

"Do I?"

"Yer does."

"Then why did you leave Omaha?"

"I are going trappin', I told yer."

"Yes, you are, but it's to set traps for human lives, not for pelts."

"Does yer say I is a renegade?"

"That is about the size of it, Dismal Dick."

"Waal yer is away off, as yer will find out when yer axes them as knows me."

"Suppose I ask your pard with the Rescuers?"

The man again started.

He appeared to cower before this clever boy who appeared to know so much.

But he rallied quickly and put on a look of indifference, while he asked:

"Who does yer mean?"

"Your pard."

"I hain't got none."

"Ah yes you have, Dismal Dick."

"I say I hain't."

"He is the one who met you in the store yesterday and told you that you ought to be off and that he was coming along with the command."

"I didn't see nobody in the store yesterday."

"Yes you did."

"I wasn't at no store yesterday."

"Yes you were, for I saw you there, and you were buying a belt, for yours was broken."

"It's the very belt you have on."

"Yer lies ag'in, kid."

"All right, say what you please; but you are the man I want, for I recognized the voice I heard yesterday, and I'll know the other one too when I hear it."

"Then yer doesn't know who t'other was?" quickly asked the man.

"Ah! you admit then that you met some one there then?" and Charlie caught at his words.

"I doesn't admit nothin'," growled Dismal Dick, angry with himself at the slip of the tongue he had made.

"Well, I'll take a look through your pack-saddle and see what your trapping outfit consists of?"

"Does yer intend to rob me?"

"Oh, no, I am no road-agent, Dismal Dick, and so will not take any of your property, though I will look it over."

"Come, Pete, we will open the pack."

"Heap glad," said Pawnee Pete, laconically, for he was anxious to have a look into the pack-saddle, feeling that there was much within it that he could appropriate, as the Indian's right to what he captured he deemed undeniable.

So the pack-saddle was opened, Dismal Dick scowling at them the while, and muttering curses upon their heads.

A couple of beaver-traps were found; that was all in the way of a trapper's accouterments.

But there was a large amount of ammunition, half a dozen new revolvers, a dozen bowie-knives, beads, trinkets to please the eyes of Indians, and a number of gay-colored blankets.

There was a handsome pair of boots, too, far too small to fit the huge foot of Dismal Dick, a pair of spurs, some moccasins, and a lot of provisions, coffee, sugar, tea and bacon.

When all had been searched Dashing Charlie said:

"Well, Dismal Dick, this pack tells the story."

"What story?" was the question in the sepulchral voice of the prisoner.

"It tells that you were going straight to the Sioux camp."

"It don't prove no sich thing."

"Oh, yes, it does, for what are you doing with all these things, if you were only going trapping?"

"I got 'em ter give ther Injuns if they should capter me."

"Don't you know that the Indians would take them without their giving?"

The man was silent and Charlie continued:

"Now, Dismal Dick, I know just what you meant to do, and it is going hard with you when Captain Emmett sees what you have here."

"I guess, Dismal Dick, that you will have to be hanged."

CHAPTER XIV.

A YOUNG STRATEGIST.

THE remark of the young plainsman took the color again from the face of the prisoner.

Pawnee Pete had said but little.

He had felt that he had done his part, and accomplished it well.

The whole time he was watching the face of the prisoner, and what he saw there seemed to interest him.

But Pete was more interested in studying the contents of the pack-saddle.

He only waited to see Charlie call for a division to wade in with a will for the things he wanted.

When he saw the man turn pale at Charlie's words, he said in his quiet way:

"Pale-face heap scared at Charlie."

"Oh, no, I won't be the one to scare him, Pete; but wait until the boys get hold of him, for he meant to trap us instead of beaver."

"Straight talk, heap sense," said Pawnee Pete.

"Now, Pete, we must put these things back in the pack-saddle."

It was the Indian's time now to change countenance, and he said eagerly:

"Belong to Pawnee Pete and Charlie."

"No; they belong to Dismal Dick here; but we must put them away for safe-keeping, and when the captain comes he will know what to do with them."

"Pete know."

"No, you must not touch them, Pete, until the captain sees them."

"Pete heap sorry."

"When the man is hanged, Pete, I guess the captain will give you what you want from this pack, for Dismal Dick will have no use for them then."

"No, don't want 'em on trail to happy hunting-grounds."

"Nor on the other trail should he take that one."

"Charlie know," was Pete's resigned rejoinder.

"Well, Pete, we must leave it to the captain; but then you know this man has a pard in the outfit."

"I hain't," said Dismal Dick.

"I know that you have."

"Yer can't call him."

"I only wish that I could; but I'll know his voice when I hear it, as I recognized yours, for I confess I did not see you."

"Yer didn't then."

"No."

"Then yer has no proof ag'in' me."

"Yes, I have, for my ears can prove as well as my eyes."

"And yer intends ter pitch onter some other man in the lay-out jist from hearin' him talk?"

"I did expect to, Dismal Dick, but now I think of it, I would make a sad mistake to take you to camp."

"That's just what I knows, pard, and if you and the Injun wants ter take my traps and let me go I'll call it a bargain."

"Will you throw your pack-horse in?"

"Yas."

"And the one you are riding?"

"I'll do it ef I has ter."

"Have you got any money about your clothes, Dismal Dick?"

"Well, I has a leetle."

"Will you give us that too?"

"Yas, I guesses I'll have ter do it, so take ther whole outfit, give me my belt o' arms and let me shake day-day to yer, young pard."

"Why this terrible anxiety to get away, Dismal Dick, if you are an innocent man?"

The man flushed and made no reply.

"You are too anxious, and it but proves your guilt."

"It hain't so."

"It certainly does, when you are willing to give up all you have, your horses too, to get away from us."

"I wants ter go free."

"Yes, you wish to get away before the Rescuers come, for well you know that they will hang you."

Not a word did the prisoner utter, and Charlie continued after awhile:

"Now I have been real stupid not to examine your pockets, for you may have something hidden away there of even more value than your pack and horses."

"Come, Pete, we will see what he has hidden away about him."

"You hold him and I'll do the searching."

With a furious oath the bound man sought to resist, but Pawnee Pete threw himself upon him and Charlie began his search, the young strategist now confident that he would find tell-tale evidence against the prisoner.

CHAPTER XV.

PROOF.

FOR a youth of his age Charlie Emmett was progressing swimmingly.

He seemed cut out for just such work as was falling to his lot, and he did it with no bluster and bravado, but with coolness and determination.

At heart Charlie pitied the man he held at his mercy.

But reason told him that the man was a black-hearted villain, one who had sided with the redskins against his own race and that he was then on his way to the Sioux village to plot the destruction of the Rescuers for what their death would bring to him.

Dismal Dick was determined not to be searched if he could prevent it, and he gave a kick at Pawnee Pete, when he started toward him that would have laid him flat had it struck him.

But the agility of the Indian saved him.

Then, with his arms bound, he fought with his head, teeth and feet until Charlie suddenly tried another plan.

Cocking his revolver he held it full in the face of the man and said in a determined way:

"See here, Dismal Dick, I have just this to say, and I mean it."

"Keep quiet, or I'll pull trigger, and the result will be a renegade starts on his last trail."

"Now Pete, throw that lariat around his neck, and if he struggles we'll haul him up."

Pawnee Pete obeyed, and Dismal Dick read in the boy's eyes that he was not to be trifled with longer.

"Don't rope me, fer I'll not fight yer," he said.

But the rope was thrown about his neck and the noose drawn as tight as a cravat.

The other end was placed over a limb and saddling his horse Charlie made it fast to his saddle-born.

"Now, Pawnee Pete, if he kicks any more just lead Midnight off until you hoist him up in the air."

"Me will do it," firmly responded the Indian, and Dismal Dick felt sure that he would be as good as his word.

Thus it was that the man was forced to remain quiet and be searched.

Charlie did his searching as well as a road-agent could have done it, for all there was hidden away he found.

A belt of money came first.

"You are rich, Dismal Dick; but I do not intend to rob you, for it is not money I am after."

"What in thunder is yer after then?"

"I don't know; but we'll find out soon."

There was a small revolver concealed in an inner pocket, which would have been a ready weapon had the desperado gotten his hands free, and caught the boy and the red-skin off their guard.

A gold watch and a silver one, some ladies' jewelry and other things were next found, and then, from a pocket in the back of his hunting shirt, Charlie found a large envelope containing papers.

These the man begged for at once, for he said:

"See here, boy pard, them is old-time letters, keepsakes from my dead wife and I doesn't wish yer ter read 'em."

Charlie responded as he glanced over the papers:

"Your dead wife wrote several different hands, Dismal Dick; but I shall not read any old letters I promise you, but this is no letter."

Among some papers that were old and worn Charlie discovered several that were clean and recently written.

One of these he opened and he gave a long whistle while the prisoner uttered a groan.

"See here, Pete, let me read you something."

"Yes, Pete want hear talking-paper."

"I'll read just what this says:

"Colonel Sibley sends out from Omaha two companies of cavalry, two pieces light artillery, and three companies of infantry, all numbering about two hundred men."

"They follow as support to Captain Emmett, who has one hundred men who are to be more feared than the soldiers."

"From Fort Blank goes three companies of cavalry, one gun and one company mounted infantry."

"From the post only cavalry, four companies, making in all a support of six hundred men for Emmett."

"They march toward a given point and will be within a day's call; but look out for Emmett's men for they are to do the work, and the captain has a secret motive in wishing to drive you from your village, other than rescuing prisoners."

"I send this by a faithful messenger in case harm befalls me, and the signature will tell you who I am, and you may look for me the moment I can get away."

"SAN ANTONIO."

Charley gave a long whistle when he finished reading this, and said in his blunt way:

"Dismal Dick, you are a goner, for this hangs you."

CHAPTER XVI.

A FLANK MOVEMENT.

THAT Dismal Dick felt the words of the boy were true his face showed.

He was as white as his burned face could get, and he trembled at what he knew must be his fate, unless he could escape in some way.

He knew that the boy could not be bribed, so he dismissed that idea, and it then flashed upon him to play a bold game, and he said:

"See here, boy pard, them papers hain't mine."

"Well, I found them on you."

"That's nothin' for I got 'em from a man I kilt back on the trail yesterday."

"Don't lie, Dismal Dick."

"It are so, for I got ther money from him too."

"We was old enemies, and he drew his gun on me when we met on ther trail, and I got there with my bullet first—see?"

"When was this?"

"Yesterday."

"At what time?"

"When I camped at noon."

"When did you leave Omaha?"

"About ten o'clock."

"I knew you were lying, Dismal Dick, for it was just noon when I heard you in the store say you would start last night, and you got full of rum and did not leave until in the night, for you have not camped since you left."

"I don't care for your dead wife's letters, but this paper just gives you away, and when my uncle comes up with the men I'll show it to him and he will decide your case."

"He'll hang me."

"If he don't I'll be surprised."

"You don't want my life on your hands, and you only a boy?"

"I have been forced to have other lives on my conscience, of just such men as you, Dismal Dick, and though I hate to take a life, I manage to sleep well of nights, for I was not to blame."

"You will be now."

"No, I'll be glad to feel that if I did not capture you and give you up to the Rescuers, you would have been the cause of many of them losing their lives."

"I'm sorry for you, Dismal Dick, but I have got to do my duty."

The man saw his doom and argued to be set free, then pleaded, and finding all in vain, began to curse the boy, the Indian and the whole outfit of Rescuers.

In his savage utterances he suddenly said something that caused Charlie to start.

"What did you say, Dismal Dick?"

The prisoner saw his mistake and said:

"I didn't say nothin'."

"Ah, I don't mind your cursing me, for my old grandmother used to tell me that curses, like chickens, go home to roost, but you said just now that you had one satisfaction that if you were hanged there was one to avenge you, and I'd find it out, too."

"I didn't say it."
 "You did!"
 "I said some day you'd be in trouble and thar would be no one to help yer out."
 "Those were not your words, and what you did say was that there was one to avenge you if you were hanged, and he is with the band of Rescuers, of course."
 "I don't know who is with 'em."
 "The man you met in the store, but I am glad you said what you did."
 "I didn't say it."
 "It warns me not to take you to the camp, or let you be seen, for if your pard sees you a prisoner he will skip and warn the Sioux of our coming."
 "I am so glad you said it, Dismal Dick."
 "What is yer goin' ter do with me?"
 "That depends upon what my uncle decides, but I shall not be fool enough to take you a prisoner into camp."
 "You is a thunderin' fool, boy, for what harm kin it do?" and the man grew very uneasy now.
 He realized that in his anger he had said too much and the quick wit of the boy had seen what might happen from his words.
 "Pete."
 "Me hear."
 "We must start on the back trail."
 "All same for Pete."
 "I wish to get in the rear of the Rescuers and overtake them."
 "That easy."
 "I will then leave you with Dismal Dick here, while I go on and report to my uncle just what we have caught."
 "He be glad."
 "I think he will."
 "Coming in the rear as I will, the men will think I am just from the fort."
 "Yes, Pete see."
 "I will then let my uncle know that you are following with the prisoner and he will decide what is to be done with him."
 "Hang him," was Pawnee Pete's cool suggestion.
 "It looks that way; but he will decide."
 "Come, let us be off now and make our flank movement on the Rescuers and get in their rear."
 Pawnee Pete was always ready, and when they had bound the prisoner to the saddle they mounted their horses and with Dismal Dick's pack-horse leading, they began their flank movements to get to the rear of Captain Emmett and his men.

CHAPTER XVII.

IN CAMP.

THE Rescuers had left on time, and Captain Emmett set the pace at which they were to travel.

He did not care to push on the first day, and decided to camp after a fair day's march and thus get men and horses in trim for the long and hard trip ahead of them.

So the men went into camp before sunset, and all were soon busy getting supper, staking out their horses and making themselves comfortable for the night.

Many of the men had asked about Dashing Charlie, and why he was not along, and Captain Emmett had replied that he had gone to the fort and would come along with Pawnee Pete in good time.

The fact was the captain could not believe that Charlie would find his man.

It seemed so like a wild-goose chase for him to go off in search of a man simply on what he had heard.

"We wants him along, cap'n, for we wont have no luck without the boy," said one of the men who had been on the fur-trading expedition and had taken a great fancy to the boy.

"He'll be with us in good time, Hendricks," was the captain's reply.

Whitewash has decided to "spread himself" upon the first meal in camp, and so he had taken particular pains with his supper.

"I say, Whitewash, I'm starving," cried Doctor Chalmers, who was watching him, with the greatest impatience.

"All right, sab, supper be ready in jist one minute," was the answer.

The shadows of night had fallen in the timber when the guard back on the trail gave a quick challenge.

The answer was not heard, but it was satisfactory it seemed, for the clatter of hoofs was heard and up to the headquarters camp-fire rode Dashing Charlie.

In the light of the fires he was recognized and such a yell as went up would have made even the Sioux turn pale with envy.

"Ho, Charlie, glad to see you."

"Did you bring me the last order from the fort?" called out Captain Emmett.

"Yes, uncle."

"And where is Pete?"

"He is off scouting, sir."

"All right, come and have supper for you are just in time."

"And I'm as hungry as a wolf," said Charlie, as he led his horse away to stake out.

"That boy has news, Emmett."

"You think so, Doc?"

"I am sure of it."

"Now I thought he looked very serene."

"That is just it, for he will not let his face betray him."

"But we will soon know, and I'll wager I am right."

In a few moments Charlie appeared, just as Whitewash announced:

"Supper is ready, gemmans, and it are a good one."

Whitewash was right, for it was a good one, and the two men and Charlie began the attack with a relish that showed perfect health and keen appetites.

There was bacon, venison steaks, hot biscuit, roasted potatoes and coffee.

Charlie was too hungry to talk at first, but at last said:

"Well, uncle, I got him."

"Got who?"

"The man I went after."

"Nonsense!"

"I've got him, or rather Pete has."

"Charlie, out here when a man comes into camp and reports that he has killed an Indian, the first thing said to him is to show the scalp."

"I can show my man, sir."

"Where is he?"

"Back on the trail several miles."

"With Pete?"

"Yes, sir."

"Who is he?"

"Do you remember Dismal Dick?"

"I should think I did, for he is a bitter foe of mine, and I have expected to have to kill him some day."

"Well, sir, you can hang him now."

"Hang him, and for what, Charlie?"

"I took this paper from him, uncle, and you can see what it says."

"But why did you not bring your man to camp with you?" asked Captain Emmett, as he took the paper.

"Because I would only give the alarm to the spy in the outfit, who is his pard," was Charlie's quiet response.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DECISION.

HAVING satisfied his appetite, which was fully up to a man's standard, Dashing Charlie satisfied the curiosity of his uncle and Doctor Chalmers, about his capture of Dismal Dick.

"I came very near camping on the trail and waiting for you to come, uncle, and had done so; but a remark made by Dismal Dick, or rather a threat, caused me to see that whoever his pard was in the band he would be alarmed and desert, thus going to the Indian village and giving the alarm of our coming."

"So I got Pawnee Pete to flank the trail and come on in your rear, having the prisoner with him."

"Charlie, you have a very nice head on your young shoulders, and you deserve credit for what you have done," said the captain.

"I told you he had news, and the boy knows just what he is about," Doc Chalmers remarked.

"But what is to done now, sir?"

"Pawnee Pete is some miles back on the trail with his man, you say?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I suppose we could go back with half a dozen men whom we can trust, and hang Dismal Dick, for this paper is proof of his guilt beyond all doubt."

"That will be the best thing to do," the doctor said.

"But how will you know that among the picked men you take, one of them is not the pard of Dismal Dick?" Charlie asked.

"Well said, my boy, for we do not know, as I have not the slightest suspicion of who the man may be."

"But he surely has a pard in camp, uncle."

"You think so?"

"I know so, sir, for you remember the words I overheard, that he would follow with the command, and—"

"You are right indeed."

"Then, too, the prisoner made a threat that his pard would get even."

"True."

"As we do not know our man, we can not take any one back with us to hang him, Emmett."

"No, and I can only send him back to Omaha, or rather to the fort, and ask Colonel Sibley to keep him there for me."

"Who will you send him by, uncle?"

"There's the rub again, for who can I send?"

This was a question which no one could answer just then, as the man sent might be the pard of the renegade prisoner, and even if several went they would be missed and one of them might be the man whose identity they wished to find out and thus have a chance to rescue his comrade and escape with him.

At last Charlie solved the question with the remark:

"Why not send Pete, uncle?"

"Ah!"

"He has not yet joined the command, and he could go back with the prisoner to the fort, get a fresh horse from Colonel Sibley, and if you went slow for a couple of days, by rapidly riding head you off on the trail."

"Right again, Charlie."

"We will mount our horses and ride back to where Pete is."

"If we leave camp on horseback, uncle, the men will wonder at it, while we can slip out on foot and walk there and back by midnight, while Pawnee Pete can push on for the fort at once."

"Charlie, you should be a general, for you would never be caught napping or get into a tight place from which you could not extricate yourself."

"We will go at once," said Captain Emmett.

Doctor Chalmers thought it best that he should remain, in case anything of importance came up in camp, and so the captain and Dashing Charlie went the rounds of the grounds and sauntered beyond the lines at one part.

Once they had gained the trail they walked rapidly back toward Omaha.

It was a tramp of four miles, but neither minded it, and at last Charlie guided his uncle to where the Indian was in hiding.

Pawnee Pete was on the alert and suddenly appeared before them like a ghost.

"Well, Pete, you and Charlie have been doing well, and I congratulate you."

"Where is your prisoner?"

"He here all right, Big Chief."

"I am going to ask you to take him to the fort, Pete, and deliver him to Colonel Sibley with a letter I have written for you to give him."

"You must not go through Omaha, but flank it, and try and get to the fort before daylight."

"Cover the face of your prisoner up when you go into the fort, so no one will recognize him, and ask Colonel Sibley to have him confined secretly, for I do not wish it to get out yet that Dismal Dick has been captured."

"I have asked the colonel to give you a fresh horse, as good a one as there is in the service, and you can head us off somewhere on the trail day after to-morrow, and make believe you have been scouting ahead all the time."

"Do you understand, Pete?"

"Me know it all," said Pete, repeating Charlie's praise of him.

"Well, as soon as we have seen your prisoner, you must go, and don't spare your horses."

"Me no kill Dismal Dick."

"Save heap long ride."

"No, indeed; you must do as I tell you."

"Pete do it very good," was the answer of the Pawnee, and he led the way to where his prisoner was bound.

CHAPTER XIX.

PETE AND HIS PRISONER.

PAWNEE PETE began to saddle the horses, while Captain Emmett had a talk with the prisoner.

The man was seated in a ravine, where there was a small camp-fire burning, and he scowled savagely as Charlie advanced with his uncle.

"Well, Dismal Dick, I expected I would have to kill you some day, for I am sure I know who it was that has twice tried to assassinate me—but I did not expect to have to hang you."

"And yer won't."

"I expect I will have to, for you are worse even than I believed you to be."

"You is jist down on me, and has put up this job ter git rid o' me."

"Oh, no; for I did not suspect you of being a renegade."

"Charlie, here, was the one who did it all. But, come; I shall send you back to Omaha."

"Who takes me?" was the quick inquiry.

"Pawnee Pete."

"Who else goes?"

"Have you any one you wish to go along with you, for I do not wish to be unkind?"

"Yas, I has, and—"

"And what?"

The man was silent, and Captain Emmett asked:

"Well, who do you wish to go along with you to see after your interests?"

"Never mind; let ther Injun go."

"You have changed your mind?"

"I has."

"Well, I shall send you back, and you will be held as a prisoner at the fort."

"At the fort?"

"Yes."

"They'll hang me."

"Not without trial, as we might do if you stayed here."

"Send me to Omaha."

"No, you go to the fort."

"And my horses and traps?"

"You shall take all with you, except your papers."

"I wants them."

"You shall not have them, for they go into the hands of Colonel Sibley to await my return."

"If I should not get back, then he will have in these papers, all the evidence against you he will need."

In vain did Dismal Dick plead, he had to go, and as Pawnee Pete had the horses ready he was aided to his saddle and bound there.

Then his horse and the pack-animal were tied together, and Pawnee Pete mounted and held the lead rope in his hand.

"Don't forget to head us off, Pete."

"Pete remember very good," was the reply, and he started off with his prisoner, quite proud at the mission with which he was intrusted, while Captain Emmett and Dashing Charlie turned back to camp.

Pete would never have spoken on the long ride of twenty miles, had not the prisoner addressed him, which he did soon after they had started.

"I say, chief," began Dismal Dick, trying to compliment the Indian by promoting him.

"Pawnee Pete no chief yet."

The last word was uttered in a tone that showed Pete intended to be a chief some day, if he did not lose his scalp.

"You are a Pawnee?" continued Dismal Dick.

"Yes, you know Pete."

"You hate the Sioux."

"Me hate Sioux heap."

"Well now I will tell you how you can get a dozen Sioux scalps."

"Pawnee Pete heap glad."

"It is all wrong for them to rope me in like this, for I hain't done nothin'; but I knows where there is a band o' Sioux camped, and they think I is their friend."

"I were going ter take ther pack to 'em, and git even with 'em by making 'em believe I were their friend."

"But you go with me and we'll sweep 'em all in and you shall have ther scalps."

"Pete listen."

"I am glad you do, for I'll tell you that if you will go with me and be my pard, I'll give you my horse there and all in the pack-saddle."

"Heap things for poor Injin."

"You bet it's a fortin for you, and that hain't all, for I'll give you two hundred dollars, nearly half of what I have."

"What Pete do?"

"Just take me to the place I tell you and then set me free."

"Then we will be pards for life, and get rich together, while you'll have plenty of Sioux scalps."

"Pete glad."

"You'll do it then?" eagerly said Dismal Dick.

"Pete take Dismal Dick to fort first."

"Then Pete go after Sioux scalp, and when Dismal Dick get hang all he has comes to Pawnee, for Little Chief Charlie say so."

Dismal Dick groaned in agony of spirit, and then began to curse the Indian most savagely, which pleasantry he kept up for several miles, though it had the same effect upon the red-skin as flowing water upon a duck's back to drown it.

CHAPTER XX.

THE PAWNEE'S MISSION.

IF Pawnee Pete understood the bitter oaths heaped upon him by his prisoner he showed no sign of so doing, but continued serenely on his way.

Whenever he could do so, the nature of the trail permitting, he urged his horses to a gallop and kept them at it, for he was anxious to reach the fort before dawn as Captain Emmett had told him to do.

At last, just half an hour before daybreak the lights of the fort became visible, and halting, Pawnee Pete enveloped the head of the prisoner in a blanket, so that he could not only not be recognized, but could hardly breathe.

The sharp challenge of the sentinel he answered with the words:

"Me Pawnee Pete; want see big chief."

"Come from Cap'n Emmett."

The sentinel communicated the intelligence to the corporal, who in turn informed the sergeant, and thus it reached the officer of the day, who admitted Pete and his prisoner.

The officer did not care to disturb Colonel Sibley at that early hour, but Pawnee Pete was so persistent that he did so, and the Indian and his prisoner were admitted to the commandant's room.

"Well, Pawnee Pete, I thought you were away with Captain Emmett?"

"Me go, but me come."

"Have bad pale-face prisoner."

"Talking-paper tell big chief heap," and Pawnee Pete held out the letter and other papers given him by Captain Emmett.

"Ah, and you seem to be afraid your prisoner will get sunburnt, by the care you take of him."

"Big chief say no want know who bad pale-face is."

"Might have heap trouble."

"Ah, yes," and Colonel Sibley hastily read over Captain Emmett's letter.

His brow clouded as he did so, and stepping forward he drew the blanket from the head of the prisoner.

"So it is you, Mister Dismal Dick, is it?"

"Well, I have always thought you were a villain."

"But I'll see to it that you are cared for."

"Cover him up again, Pete."

This the Indian did, and then the orderly recalled the officer of the day, who was told to send the prisoner to secluded quarters, where only one man would be allowed to see him, the one who cared for him.

"Have his horses and traps also cared for, Captain Varney, until called for, and search him thoroughly," were the colonel's orders.

Then he gave Pawnee Pete an order on the quartermaster, allowing him to select his own horse from the Government herd, and told his own cook to give him a good breakfast, for the red-skin scout said he would go at once to overtake the captain.

A couple of hours after, Pawnee Pete, having enjoyed a sumptuous breakfast, and mounted upon a splendid horse, rode away from the fort, delighted with himself and the world in general, with the single exception, however, of the Sioux tribe.

He carried a letter from the colonel to Captain Emmett, and hoped to head off the command some time during the following day, for he cared little for rest for himself.

In the mean while the Rescuers had moved on the next day, but at a slower pace than the men had expected.

For some reason the captain was not crowding them, and Charlie hinted that his uncle wished to first know that the military commands were also on the march in their respective positions.

Pawnee Pete was asked about, and again Dashing Charlie explained that he was well ahead and they would see him soon.

Girard the guide was ahead on the trail and splendidly mounted, as silent as a sphinx, Scalper Sam, the new scout, was first on one flank and then the other.

"He is as silent as a dumb man, but he knows his business, that is certain," Captain Emmett said of him to Dr. Chalmers.

"Charlie was here, there and everywhere."

He enjoyed seeing the men on the march, and would first join one group and then the other.

He also dropped back among the pack-horses and had a talk with the five men who were the guard of these animals, a dozen in number.

Then he geyed Whitewash for awhile, and enjoyed all there was in the expedition, for he was thoroughly a boy after all.

The next day Charlie went ahead with Girard

the guide, and then deserted him for Scalper Sam, to whom he had taken quite a fancy.

It was while riding with Scalper Sam that Charlie's quick eye detected a horseman ahead, and he said, quickly:

"Injuns!"

CHAPTER XXI.

THE SILENT SCOUT.

SCALPER SAM had welcomed Charlie's coming to join him with a nod.

It was not very cordial, it was not forbidding, and then he seemed to feel that he had done his duty.

Charlie returned the nod with a smile and said:

"I'm studying trailing far harder than I ever did my books, and as I have heard you are a dandy plainsman I thought I'd come and ride with you to get a few pointers."

The scout smiled and bowed, yet made no reply.

"You are from Texas I believe?" said Charlie.

If he heard the question Scalper Sam showed no sign of having done so.

"Guess he's a little deaf," muttered Charlie and he said again:

"Are you a Texan?"

Now if there was any one in the world that Charlie had an admiration for it was a Texan.

But still no answer, and for the third time Charlie said:

"Were you ever a Texas Ranger?"

But just then Scalper Sam seemed to have made a discovery.

He drew rein, dismounted and examined the ground with the greatest of care.

He left his horse standing, and as he walked off, when he wanted him, he simply held up his hand and the animal joined him.

This went on for some time and Charlie became deeply interested.

But Scalper Sam made no reply to his question, and mounting rode on once more.

Charlie feared he might have been too personal in his question, so returned to the attack with:

"How many Indians have you ever killed, Scalper Sam?"

The man made no reply, but thrusting his hand into his breast pocket drew out a small arrow, the sides of which were notched.

"Count 'em," he said in a low tone, as though afraid to speak loud.

Charlie did so and responded:

"There are ninety notches here."

Scalper Sam bowed.

"Does every notch represent an Indian?"

Again a bow.

Charlie gave a whistle of surprise and gazed more fixedly at the face of the silent scout.

"Did you ever kill any white men, Scalper Sam?" he asked after a long pause.

Again the hand went into a pocket of the hunting-shirt, and it brought forth this time what appeared to be the miniature lid of a coffin.

It was painted black, and around the edge were tacks driven, some score in number, and filling up half of one side.

This grim "Life Book" he handed in silence to Dashing Charlie, as he had the arrow, recording the doom of ninety Indians.

"Do these tacks represent white men you have killed?"

Scalper Sam nodded.

"There are nineteen of them."

Again a nod, but no word in response.

Again Charlie regarded the man curiously.

He had heard him spoken of as a very remarkable man, and officers at the fort had said Scalper Sam was a man with a record.

"Lordy! ninety Indians and nineteen white men—one hundred and nine in all."

"Ah! what a record!" thought Charlie.

Then he excused the large number by saying to himself:

"But he is a Texan."

A few moments after Charlie asked himself:

"But is he a Texan?"

As he had not had a satisfactory answer to this question he muttered:

"I'll ask him again."

But just as he was about to do so he peered ahead into a clump of timber and beheld a horseman.

He recognized the horseman at a glance.

It was Pawnee Pete, and Charlie was greatly tickled to see that Scalper Sam had not discovered him yet, though the eyes of the scout were upon the ground as they rode along the trail.

"I'll see how bad he scares," thought Charlie, and he drew rein suddenly calling out excitedly. "Injuns!"

To his surprise the scout did not scare worth a cent.

He grasped the situation in less than a second, his eyes sought and found the Indian horseman and in less than an instant he had thrown his deadly rifle to his shoulder, and his finger touched trigger.

Quick as a flash Charlie had struck up the rifle, but not a moment too soon, for the bullet went over Pawnee Pete's head and dangerously near.

The Pawnee slid from his horse and sought cover with an alacrity that was surprising, while Charlie called out:

"It's Pawnee Pete!"

"Don't fire again!"

The silent scout quietly lowered his rifle, loaded it and placed it across his knee as before.

"Ho, Pawnee Pete, where are you?"

"Come out, it's all right, for Scalper Sam took you for a Sioux."

"He's not used to these northern Indians, you know."

Whether Pawnee Pete knew or not, he still remained under cover, watching the approach of the two toward the timber.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SCOUT'S APOLOGY.

CHARLIE was considerably worried over the sudden act of the silent scout.

He was sorry he had tried to scare him, and came to the conclusion that Scalper Sam was not readily frightened and was a very dangerous man.

He did not know exactly how Pawnee Pete would take it, and so said:

"You don't know Pete, so of course you are not to blame."

"Pete don't understand being shot at, so is hiding to see what's up."

"I'll ride on and make it all right."

Scalper Sam nodded, and the boy at once rode forward into the timber.

"Ho, Pete, where are you?"

"Come, Pete, it's all right," he called out.

Pete did not at once show himself, but from cover came the words:

"Pale-face scout heap quick on shoot."

"Nearly kill Pete."

"Charlie save Pete by knock gun 'way up."

"You see, Pete, Scalper Sam is a stranger in these parts, and don't know a Pawnee from a Sioux."

"Sam heap blamed fool," was Pawnee Pete's criticism, as he now strode out of the bushes where he had been hiding.

"He'll know better now, Pete; but you must forgive him, yes, forgive him like the good Indian that you are."

"Me good Injin, heap good."

"And you will forgive Scalper Sam for his mistake, and forget all about it?"

"Yes, Pete forgive and he forget, but me remembers all same," was the reply.

Dashing Charlie laughed at this, and then said:

"Well, you have made good time to the fort and back, but did you get Dismal Dick there all right?"

"Yes, have letter for big chief."

"Good! Keep it and give it to him, for I will go back to the column with you; but don't say you have been to the fort."

"No, Pete know."

Just then Scalper Sam rode into the timber and the Indian eyed him most curiously.

In this Scalper Sam returned the compliment and then Charlie said:

"Tell him, Scalper Sam, it was a mistake, your shooting at him."

The silent scout smiled, held forth his hand, grasped that of Pete and rode on in silence.

This was the "making up" or explanation.

But Pete was accustomed to use the sign language himself and accepted the explanation as satisfactory by the offering of the scout's hand.

"Well, Pete, that man is the oddest I ever met."

"He has answered all my questions but one, and yet has not spoken a word."

"Come, we will go to the column, for uncle will be more than glad to see you back again."

"Pete heap glad, too."

"I expect so; but did Dismal Dick give you any trouble?"

"No."

"You got to the fort by daybreak?"

"It night when get there."

"Leave bad man with Big Chief, eat heap big breakfast, get horse and come."

"See horse?"

"Yes, and he's a fine one, isn't he?"

"Heap good horse."

"Pete get more in Sioux camp, and scalp, too."

"Well, we headed off the Sioux knowing of our coming, didn't we?"

"Yes, Pete heap glad."

They had ridden back to the trail after Scalper Sam had left them, and the head of the column of Rescuers was now in sight, and stretching out in their march for nearly half a mile.

Girard, the guide, had passed on, and at the head of the column rode Captain Emmett and Doctor Chalmers.

They recognized Charlie in the distance, and with him the Pawnee.

"Pete has made good time, indeed."

"Now we can push on after the noonday camp."

"But I didn't know Charlie was ahead," said Captain Emmett.

"He told me he was going to study under Scalper Sam, so he also must be ahead for them to have found Pete," answered the doctor.

They now came up to Charlie and the Pawnee and the latter at once handed over the letter intrusted to him by Colonel Sibley.

"Have heap good time, eat much, get good horse," explained Pete.

The captain broke the seal and read his letter hastily aloud.

It simply acknowledged the coming of the prisoner, and reception of the papers, and stated that Pete was sent off in good shape.

Then there was a statement that the three army bands were marching at a fair speed toward a given point, and would be on hand when needed by the Rescuers, while, if he, Captain Emmett, found the Indians in greater force than he expected, to send couriers to the forts and post, and three reserve parties would at once be dispatched to support those already in the field.

This pleased Captain Emmett, and he said cheerily:

"We go ahead now under the best auspices, and success must crown our efforts."

CHAPTER XXIII.

SUSPECTED.

THE camp at noon was for two hours, and Pawnee Pete slept during the whole time, for he needed rest.

Then he ate his dinner and went to the front, the flanks, or wherever he deemed best, as he had free permission to do.

As he was going ahead, Charlie said:

"Say, Pete, I want to tell you something, so which trail will you take?"

"Me go ahead, but flank white scouts."

"All right; mark your trail, and I will follow in half an hour or so, for there is something of importance I wish to say to you, and it's got to be our secret, for I have not told my uncle or Doc Chalmers."

"Pete listen very good."

"I know you will, and you are a whole team when advice is needed."

"Now go on, and mark your trail, for I'll be after you."

Pete had mounted one of the extra horses, to give his animal a rest, for he had given him a hard ride from the fort, and rode away upon the flank opposite where Scalper Sam was, for he had the left of the column.

Charlie did not wait very long, but also mounted upon an extra horse, took the trail straight ahead until out of sight of the column, then branched off to the right, and as he rode along eyed the ground most attentively.

At last he halted, examined a trail he saw and turned into it.

He knew that he was on Pawnee Pete's trail and pushed forward rapidly.

He saw that the Indian had marked the trail as he had requested, breaking a twig here and there to catch his eye, and that he had flanked well to the right to avoid seeing Girard the guide, who generally kept a couple of miles or more in advance of the column.

At last Dashing Charlie saw ahead the Pawnee seated upon a fallen tree, his horse grazing near.

He rode up to him and asked:

"What is it, Pete?"

Pawnee Pete pointed to the ashes and a wicki-up making a camp.

It showed that there had been but one person there, and he had camped for some time.

"How long ago, Pete?"

"About a moon."

"It is a one man's camp?"

"Yes."

"I wonder who?"

"Sioux."

"How do you know?"

"Pale-face don't build fire like that."

"Ah!"

"No heel trail, only moccasin."

"I see."

"Come here on pony, Indian pony—see tracks."

"Yes, I see them."

"Pony fall there, and run off."

"Leave Sioux hurt, Pete say."

"By Jove you are right, Pawnee Pete, for this must have been the camp of the young Sioux chief, Red Spirit, whose horse fell on him and broke his leg, then running away from him."

"Yes this must be where Snake Eyes found him on the march to attack the wagon train."

"Charlie know all."

"Read signs heap good."

"Well, that is my guess, Pete, and you remember I told you about meeting Snake Eyes with the Red Spirit a prisoner, and killing him."

"Pete remember, but heap bad Charlie no take Snake Eyes' scalp."

"If I had only thought of you then, I might have brought it to you; but I would not be surprised if you got plenty of scalps to make up for it before this trail is ended."

"Pete hope so; love Sioux scalps, hate Sioux."

"Well, let us say that this is where the young chief Red Spirit lay so long with a broken leg, what does it mean?"

Pawnee Pete shook his head.

He had found the lone camp and read it as a sign on the trail.

Once read he dismissed it, and Charlie's solution of its being the camp of the crippled young Sioux chief was satisfactory to him.

So he said:

"Charlie have something to tell?"

"Oh, yes, I wanted to tell you a secret."

"Me have ears."

"Yes, and they are as keen as a hound's."

"But, Pete, do you know I don't like our new scout."

"Who him?"

"Scalper Sam."

"Him bad man," said Pawnee Pete, emphatically, and Charlie laughed, for he recalled the Indian's reason for thinking so.

"Yes, he shot at you, I know; but anyhow I do not like him."

"Him like snake."

"What makes you think so?"

Pete simply tapped his head with his fingers, then placed his hand upon his heart.

The signs were impressive.

"Well, I'll tell you why I think so."

"Yes, Charlie."

"I heard two men talking together, as I told you, in a store in Omaha, but could not see either of them."

"Now one was Dismal Dick."

"Bad man."

"Yes, and I would have recognized him by his voice had I met him anywhere."

"Ugh!"

"The other voice I heard to-day."

"Scalper Sam?"

"Yes."

"Him heap bad man."

"I could only get a word or two out of him, but his voice was the same I heard in the store, for not another man in the outfit has one so deep."

"Me know."

"Now I may be wrong, and for that reason I would not tell my uncle or Doc Chalmers."

"They no believe."

"No, but you do."

"Yes, Pete heap sense."

After this rather severe lick at Captain Emmett and the doctor, the Indian was silent until Charlie again spoke.

"I may be wrong, as I said, Pete, but there can be no harm in finding out, and I wish you to help me watch him."

"Pete all right."

"It is true he was an army scout, and has the best of letters from officers in Texas; but we will watch him all the same, and if we see that he attempts any funny business we will just jump him, that is all."

"Pete ready."

"I knew you would be, and so I came to tell you; but do not mention this to any one, not even my uncle, only keep your eyes open," and with this advice to Pete, Charlie again sought the trail to have another ride in company with Scalper Sam.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE SHADOWED SCOUT.

WHEN Charlie again joined Scalper Sam on the march, if he was an unwelcome visitor he did not see it revealed, for the man greeted him with a smile.

But he said nothing, and Charlie began to tell him about his coming West, hoping to interest him in his adventures, and draw him out to talk a little.

Scalper Sam seemed interested, and yet did not for a moment neglect his work of trailing and watching.

He did this with an ease and skill that won Charlie's admiration, though he still doubted him.

At last he got a word from the silent man.

"Do you believe in ghosts, Scalper Sam?" he asked suddenly.

He saw the man start and change color, and then quick came the answer.

"Yes I do, for I often see a ghost, the ghost of a woman, and it will haunt me to my dying day."

Then the spurs sunk into the flanks of his horse and he dashed on.

Charlie was surprised at the feeling he had shown, and still more so that he had at last forced the sphinx to talk.

"There is no mistake, I am not wrong, for that man is the one I heard speak in the store in Omaha to Dismal Dick."

"Yes, I am right, for there are not two men on this frontier with voices such as he has."

"But wasn't he almost scared when he said he did believe in ghosts?"

"I wonder if he has ever killed a woman, and she haunts him?"

"I'll ask him."

With this resolve Charlie rode on and overtook the man he had now determined to shadow.

Scalper Sam was all serene once more and seemed to have forgotten the ghost incident.

But Charlie played innocent and said:

"I am sorry, Scalper Sam, if I hurt your feelings in speaking about ghosts; but did you kill the woman that haunts you?"

Then the man turned almost fiercely upon him and asked:

"Boy, who told you to ask me that question?"

"Nobody told me, sir, but you showed me a stick you kept a record on of the Indians you killed, and a coffin-lid of the white men, and I thought maybe you had another of the women you had killed."

"My! what a large grave-yard you would have, if they were all in it, Scalper Sam."

The man regarded the youth with a look that was piercing and searching in the extreme.

But Charlie met his gaze with one of utter innocence, and ignorant that he had said anything out of the usual run of conversation.

After a minute of silence the scout said, and his voice was deeper than ever now, as though he was much moved:

"See here, boy, if you wish to keep on the trail with me, don't talk to me."

"You can learn by watching me, but don't speak to me unless it is necessary."

"All right, Scalper Sam, I won't worry you by talking; but I like to be with you and see just how you do, for every one says you are a great scout."

"Now, I won't say any more."

And Charlie kept his word, though he rode the rest of the afternoon with Scalper Sam.

He watched his face all the time, when he could do so without being caught at it, and he decided in his own mind that Scalper Sam was not so devoted to the work on the march as he would make believe.

He saw that he was trailing for effect only, and "putting on," as Charlie mentally expressed it.

Toward night the scout moved obliquely to the right and came to the spot which Girard the guide had pitched upon as a camping-place.

It was a lonely spot, with plenty of wood, water and grass, and a place where a hard fight could be made if attacked.

Charlie noticed that Scalper Sam went right there, as readily as though he knew the country perfectly and was aware of just where Girard the guide would select his camping-ground.

The scout messed with Girard the guide, when in camp, while Pawnee Pete always slept near headquarters and got his meals from Whitewash, who really liked the Indian.

In fact the two were great friends and became known as *Rouge et Noir*, or the Red and Black Pards.

That night Charlie said to the Indian:

"Pete, I am more than ever certain that Scalper Sam is not a square man to us."

"Yes, me watch him, Charlie watch him, find him bad man all right."

And so it was that Scalper Sam became doubly shadowed, though he did not seem to suspect the fact in the least.

CHAPTER XXV.

A MYSTERIOUS MEETING.

HAVING determined to shadow Scalper Sam, Charlie did it most thoroughly.

He put it upon the plea of learning prairie craft, and would go from Pawnee Pete to Girard the guide, and then to the scout.

He would make the rounds twice a day, one in the morning march, and again in the afternoon.

If fretted by it the scout did not show it, and Girard and Pete were always glad to have the boy with them.

"You are learning fast, Charlie," the guide often said to him.

One day on his way to see Scalper Sam, Charlie came upon three trails instead of one.

Two were made by unshod ponies, the third was the track of Scalper Sam's large horse.

Was the scout following the unshod trails, or were they following Scalper Sam?

Then again, were all three together, as they appeared to be at times?

Charlie was determined to find out.

He had noticed one thing about Scalper Sam, from close observation, and that was when the scout went out of camp he put nothing on the pack-horses.

Everything that he had he carried with him, and was ready to depart at any time.

"I only wish I had Pete with me," the boy muttered, when he came upon the two trails blending with that of the scout's.

But not having Pawnee Pete, who was several miles away, Charlie determined to go on alone.

He rode rapidly, and reaching a ridge looked over.

There in the valley he saw three horsemen.

One was the scout, Scalper Sam, another was a white man also, mounted upon a pony, and the third was an Indian.

"It's a Sioux," said Charlie to himself, and he placed to his eye a small glass his uncle had given him.

"Lordy! it's Bricktop, as sure as I live."

"Now what is to be done?"

Charlie was in a quandary, and at last decided to remain in hiding and watch developments.

He had not very long to wait before the Indian and his white companion rode away.

Then Charlie saw Scalper Sam coming back slowly upon the trail, and he at once went to where his horse was, mounted and rode over the ridge.

Scalper Sam saw him, and came on at a canter.

As he drew near he said in his terse way:

"Can't cross down there, so come this way."

"All right, Scalper Sam; but isn't it getting near time to hunt up the camp?"

"Yes, come," and Scalper Sam led the way directly back toward the main trail.

He seemed to know just where Girard had pitched the camp, for he came out right where the guide had halted, and was waiting for the band to arrive.

It was an excellent place for a camp, but Charlie was more interested in seeing if Scalper Sam intended to tell Girard about the white man and the Indian.

But not a word did the scout say, and soon after the men rode up.

The captain and Dr. Chalmers soon had their quarters ready, while Whitewash gathered wood to make a fire.

Night came on before he had his supper ready, and after the meal Charlie decided to no longer keep the secret about what he had seen, but to tell his uncle and Dr. Chalmers.

Pawnee Pete had not yet come in, and after his discovery Charlie began to feel very anxious about him.

Another day's march more and they would reach the village of Chief Red Hair, and prowling Sioux were expected to be met with at any time.

That morning Captain Emmett had given orders for no straggling, told the guide and scouts to keep closer to the column, and to report every suspicious sign.

Charlie saw that Scalper Sam had come into camp, and not a word had he reported of what he had seen.

He had eaten his supper, and was seated by himself, smoking his pipe, as was his wont, when in camp.

"Uncle, I have something to say to you, sir, and to Doctor Chalmers," began Charlie.

They were all seated upon their blankets upon the ground, before the camp-fire, leaning back against an uprooted tree that had fallen.

Before them all was light, behind them the fallen tree cast all in shadow.

Whitewash had finished his work, and was asleep in his blankets some distance off, and the men were grouped about the camp-fires.

A guard was over the staked-out horses, and others stood sentry at different posts, while Girard was scouting around the camp and Pawnee Pete had not yet come in.

"Well, Charlie, out with it," said Captain Emmett, who saw that the boy was worried about something.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MISSING.

DOCTOR CHALMERS lighted his pipe leisurely, and said:

"Charlie, you have been up to something the past two days, so now out with it."

"Yes, Charlie, the doctor and I both have felt that you were plotting something, but you were too sly for us, and I am sure that Scalper Sam is in with you."

"Yes, uncle, Scalper Sam is in it with me, and I should have told you before, only I wanted something more to work on than my ears."

"Your ears?"

"Yes, sir, for I have recognized the other voice I heard in the store."

"Ahl and whose was it?"

"Scalper Sam's."

"Nonsense."

"That was what I feared you and the doctor would say, so I would not tell you."

"Why, that man is a scout, just from Texas."

"True, uncle, but he has been here before, for he knows this country perfectly."

"And you think that he was Dismal Dick's pard?"

"I know so."

"You are wrong."

"I am right, uncle."

"Well, Charlie, you are wide awake, I admit, but you are off the trail now."

"Uncle, have you had a report from Scalper Sam to-day?"

"Yes."

"Will you tell me what he reported?"

"He made no discoveries, he said."

"Well, he lied, for he did."

"Ahl you know that?"

"I do."

"Out with it."

"Well, uncle, all I can say is that I have been with him much on the trail, and I was going to join him this afternoon, for Pete and I have been watching him, when I made a discovery."

"What was it?"

"I just tried to get him to talk to me, but he would not."

"But he showed me his records of Indians and white men killed, and I told him he ought to have a graveyard, for he claims to have slain ninety Indians and nineteen white men, while I believe he has a woman also on the list."

At this both the doctor and Captain Emmett burst forth into a fit of hearty laughter.

"Why, Charlie, the fellow is gulling you."

"I hope so; but I scared him when I asked him if he believed in ghosts."

"Does he?"

"He said he was haunted by a woman's ghost, and he looked really scared."

"I then asked him if he had killed her."

Again the two men laughed, but Charlie looked serious and continued.

"He left me then, and said, when I joined him again I must not talk to him any more."

"And then?"

"I watched him the more, and to-day came upon his trail going along with the tracks of two unshod Indian ponies."

"Are you sure?"

"Certain."

"Well?"

Captain Emmett was serious now, as also was Doctor Chalmers.

"I took the trails, and coming to a ridge peered over, but so that I could not be seen."

"Yes."

"I saw Scalper Sam in the valley—"

"Alone?"

"No, sir."

"Who was with him?"

"The riders of those two unshod ponies."
 "Charlie, you are a trump; but, continue."
 "One was a Sioux chief, the other a white man."
 "Indeed?"
 "The white man was the renegade, Bricktop, who was one of my captors, you remember."
 "Yes, yes."
 "I saw them part after awhile, and then I mounted my horse, and, waiting for a few minutes, went at a gallop over the hill."
 "And Scalper Sam?"
 "Was coming back on the trail."
 "And joined you?"
 "Yes, sir."
 "What did he say?"
 "He did not know that I had seen him with the Sioux and the renegade, and he said nothing."
 "And then?"
 "We came on together to camp, and, as he knew just where the others were he came to this one."
 "Now, Charlie, you have again made a discovery of importance."
 "I hope so, uncle."
 "You recognized the voice of Scalper Sam as the one you heard in the store talking with Dismal Dick?"
 "I did, sir, the moment I heard him speak."
 "But you were afraid the doctor and I would laugh at you if you told us?"
 "Yes, sir."
 "So kept the secret."
 "I told Pete."
 "And shadowing Scalper Sam you saw what you reported just now?"
 "Yes, sir."
 "Then Scalper Sam is the man we want, Chalmers."
 "By all odds."
 "I will send for him at once and you and Charlie be ready to cover him if need be, for this man must not escape."
 Then Captain Emmett called out for Scalper Sam.
 But no answer came and the man was nowhere to be found in the camp.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE PURSUIT.

CAPTAIN EMMETT found it hard to believe that Scalper Sam had left the camp.
 Men were sent to search for him, but he was not to be found, and then the captain asked who had last seen him.
 "I seen him comin' toward your camp, cap'n, and he stopped there, behind that tree and stood awhile."
 "Then he turned and walked away very rapid out to where his horse was," said one of the men.
 "Did he appear to be listening?"
 "Yas cap'n, I thought he were listenin' ter orders from you, though I couldn't see you."
 "When was this, Mayo?"
 "About a quarter of an hour before you called for him, sir."
 "Chalmers, that man heard what Charlie was telling us."
 "Without a doubt."
 "And has gone."
 "Certainly, and will give the alarm to Red Hair and his Sioux."
 "Then we must push on at once and strike his camp at the very earliest moment."
 "It is just what we should do."
 "I will send a courier at once to the military columns, telling them what I intend to do and asking them to push on, and send back a call to the forts for more help, for we will have to fight for it now."
 "Come, men, that man Scalper Sam is a traitor, as Charlie can prove, and we must start at once and push for the Indian village."
 The men hastened to obey the orders given them, while Charlie said:
 "Uncle, can I go on after Scalper Sam, for he may go slow, not expecting to be found gone until morning?"
 "You can go if you take Pawnee Pete with you."
 "Pawnee Pete has not come in yet, uncle."
 "Then Girard will go with you, and you can take a couple of men along besides."
 "Better Charlie and I go alone, cap'n," said Girard, the guide, who had heard all that had been said.
 "All right, Girard, but take care of that wild boy, I beg of you."
 "I will, sir, as he will take care of me if I need aid."

"We will mark our trail, sir, and push on for news."

Ten minutes after, Girard, the guide, and Charlie rode away in the darkness, and in less than an hour the column of Rescuers were on the move and going at a trot along the Sioux trail. What had become of Pawnee Pete no one knew, and Captain Emmett, under the circumstances was growing anxious about him.

Three couriers had been dispatched to the military columns, with orders to ride hard to reach them.

Then Captain Emmett counted over his force and said:

"I yet have several over a hundred men, Chalmers, and so have little to fear from any bands of Sioux under half a thousand strong."

"Especially with support near at hand from three different quarters, and two of the columns with guns, for each piece of artillery is worth a couple of hundred men."

"Yes, the Sioux dread the wheel guns, as they call them, terribly."

Thus talking the two friends rode side by side, Captain Emmett setting the pace for his followers at a trot.

At midnight an hour's halt was made and Whitewash was anxious to get a hot supper, but was not allowed to light a fire.

At dawn another halt was made, for breakfast, and for a rest of a couple of hours.

The captain and the best trailers in the command then began to hunt for signs.

They discovered the tracks of two unshod ponies going and coming along the trail, and those going toward the Sioux village were the fresher by some hours.

Then they found the tracks of a shod horse, and it could be seen that he was going at a rapid pace.

The trail of Girard the guide and Charlie was not seen.

What could it mean if they had followed the old Sioux trail?

A fear came over the heart of Captain Emmett that Scalper Sam, expecting to be followed, or hearing pursuers on his trail, had halted and ambushed them.

If so the column had passed the spot of ambush in the darkness of the night.

Captain Emmett dared not then send men back to see, for they could not catch up again, and then too they might be met and overwhelmed by a band of Sioux.

So he pressed on once more with his brave followers, and each man seemed anxious and determined to do his duty.

The trail was known to a number of the men, and several of the best scouts in the band Captain Emmett had come to the front and ride by his side.

Thus several hours went by, when suddenly Captain Emmett called out:

"There is a fresh trail!"

He pointed to the tracks of two horses that came into the trail from down a slope and continued on as they were going.

"It is Girard and the boy, sir," cried one of the scouts who had thrown himself from his horse to examine the fresh tracks.

The men could hardly restrain a cheer at this, for they had feared that the guide and Dashing Charlie had fallen a victim to Scalper Sam.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A SCRAP OF PAPER.

THE men now went on with better hope. They had every confidence in Girard the guide, and as he had Dashing Charlie as an ally, boy though he was, they knew it was a strong team to lead them.

Coming to where the ground was soft and showed the tracks distinctly, Captain Emmett halted his men for a rest and to study the signs.

All the best men skilled in border craft came to the front, and after awhile it was decided that there were six tracks to follow, or rather the trails of six horses.

The sixth trail had lately come into the main one.

Two of these were the unshod ponies, ridden, it was supposed by the Sioux chief and Bricktop the renegade.

These were the oldest tracks according to the signs.

These two were doubtless making for the Sioux village, to give a warning of the coming attack, and had, without doubt been sent by Scalper Sam, who had met them by accident or design, which no one could tell, of course.

Then came the iron-shod tracks of Scalper

Sam's large horse, and he was not many hours behind the unshod ponies.

Next in age were the tracks, iron-shod, of Girard the guide's and Dashing Charlie's horses, and these were in hot pursuit.

Then came the sixth trail. This horse too, was shod, and he was going at a slapping pace.

"It's Pawnee Pete I'll wager a hundred," cried Doctor Chalmers, and this idea was at once supposed to be the right one.

With such pursuers as Pawnee Pete, Girard the guide, and Dashing Charlie after Scalper Sam, the Indian chief and Bricktop, it looked as though they might be taken.

That the tracks of the three belonged to the Rescuers had not been noted before, showed that Girard's and Pawnee Pete's knowledge of the country had enabled them to cut across here and there where they could gain time.

Refreshed by their rest, the Rescuers mounted and pressed on once more with renewed vigor.

Their horses must suffer they well knew; but they spared them all they could, dismounting and walking up and down the hills, watering them often, and halting ten minutes in each hour for a breathing spell.

At noon they halted over an hour, and again examined the trails.

They remained as before, only it seemed to some of the men that the horse of Scalper Sam had overtaken the two unshod ponies, for at times the tracks appeared to be going side by side, the same as if the riders were talking together.

Both men and horses began to feel the strain in the afternoon, and Captain Emmett was about to call an hour's halt, when in the trail ahead he spied a white object.

Hastily he rode toward it. It was a scrap of paper stuck in the fork of a stick.

The stick was driven down in the middle of the trail.

Unfolding the paper, Captain Emmett said quickly:

"It is Charlie's writing; but he does not write as well as he shoots, and this is written with a pencil."

He seemed to offer this as an apology for his reading it as though he had to study out the words.

The paper was soiled, the pencil a poor one, and the writing very indistinct, but Captain Emmett deciphered the following:

"We are hot on his trail.
 "Sioux and Bricktop ahead of him, but not far, and he is pressing hard to overtake them.
 "Pete is on the war-trail, too, though we have not seen him.
 "His trail came in from the right, and I think he has been watching the Sioux and Bricktop.
 "Girard says push hard and you can ride into the village not over a couple of hours behind them.
 "Will write again if pencil holds out."

"CHARLIE."

Such was the communication, and the men were delighted to get it.

It told them that Pawnee Pete and Girard were between them and an ambush, and they had no dread of running into one.

It told them also that there was a chance to make a dash into the Indian village hours before they were expected, and if they could thus surprise them, they could strike a hard blow and fall back into corral until the soldiers came up.

Thus matters looked brighter for the gallant Rescuers.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A HOT CHASE.

CHARLIE EMMETT and Girard the guide rode away in the darkness on what one would deem a useless undertaking.

They however felt that they should press on along the trail until dawn, and they could see whether Scalper Sam had passed or not.

That he would make at once, and with all speed for the village of the Sioux, Girard felt certain after he had heard all that Charlie had to tell.

"I know some cuts that will save us a dozen miles, though in many places the going is dangerous, especially in the dark," said the guide.

"Go that way then, Girard," was the prompt response.

"Just what I know you would say, boy pard, for there is no back-down in you."

"I'd like to catch that fellow because he played such a slick game upon us all, and then too if we head him off we can give the men a chance to catch up, for if Bricktop and the Sioux do

give warning of our coming we will not be expected so soon."

"That's it, boy pard, so here goes for a hot chase."

So saying Girard set the pace at a fast gait and the horses were held to it.

Now and then in the blackness of the timber all had to be left to the horses; but they never faltered.

Thrice during the night did they halt for rest for the horses, for themselves they did not care.

It was an hour before dawn that Girard said:

"There, we are back in the Sioux trail again."

"Good!"

"Now we can halt here till dawn, and our horses can feed up the canyon yonder."

"If the fellow is still ahead the daylight will show, and the rest our horses have will enable them to push the faster."

The horses were staked out, the saddles and bridles being taken off and the two pursuers of Scalper Sam laid down upon the roadside, their weapons ready.

Both sunk into a light sleep, for they knew that the slightest sound would arouse them.

But, tired as they were, they slept more soundly than they had supposed, and only awakened as a horseman sped by like the very wind.

Half bewildered they uttered no command to halt and did not fire.

"Charlie?"

"Yes."

"We were asleep."

"Dead."

"It seems so, for his coming never awakened us."

"Well?"

"We must be after him."

"I am ready."

"Dawn is coming now and we'll get breakfast done with and then be ready to have a look at the trails."

"It is best, for I am hungry, but awful wide awake now."

"We'll not saddle up until the last, to give the horses all the chance to rest we can."

"All right," and Charlie got out his bag of provisions, and the two had a cold breakfast in the coming dawn.

"Charlie."

"Well?"

"That fellow's horse can not keep that pace up long."

"He was going like a scared rabbit."

"He was, indeed."

"Do you think he knew we were here?"

"How could he?"

"Not unless he left the vicinity of the camp after we did, and has been behind us."

"That might be; but here comes daylight and we will soon know."

They put away their haversacks of provisions and went out into the trail.

There they saw the tracks of four horses.

Two were of unshod ponies, and they knew that these were Bricktop and the Sioux chief.

The other two horses were shod.

"That is the hoof-track of Scalper Sam's horse, Girard, for I have studied it well."

"And this track, Charlie?"

"Girard?"

"Yes."

"Who do you think that was that went by us like a deer in the darkness?"

"I do not know, boy pard."

"It was Pawnee Pete."

"No!"

"Yes, it was."

"How do you know?"

"See this track?"

"Yes."

"Well, it is the track of his horse, the one he rode from the fort, for we noted the strange shape of the hoofs yesterday morning."

"They are a peculiar shape."

"It was Pawnee Pete, I am sure, for you remember he was not in camp when we left."

"That's so."

"And he is on the trail, I think, of the Sioux and Bricktop, for he cannot know of Scalper Sam's leaving."

"Not unless he went to camp after we left, and is following us."

"Well, we must catch up with him, that's all."

"We must do it, boy pard."

"If we do, then we three are a match for Scalper Sam, Bricktop and the Sioux."

"If not, we had better get away from the frontier and take to farming," was the response of Girard the guide.

Then the horses were saddled, and once more the hot chase was continued, the animals being kept at a very rapid pace.

CHAPTER XXX.

OVERTAKEN.

THE horseman who had flitted by the two sleepers, like a phantom of the night, was Pawnee Pete.

He had discovered the trails of the Sioux and the renegade, and saw that they joined that of Scalper Sam.

He had followed the trails until night, and had then camped until morning.

Like the guide and Charlie, he had been startled in the night from sleep by a horseman dashing by.

Pawnee Pete was fully a hundred yards from the main trail, so could not have checked the horseman if he would.

So he could only mount and ride on in pursuit, for he seemed to know that Scalper Sam had gotten into trouble in the camp, and was making his escape.

He halted for rest after going some distance, and before dawn started once more.

In the mean while Girard and Charlie had entered the trail by a cut-off, and he went by them at a run, not dreaming of their existence.

The day dawned, and he halted to examine the trails.

He read them aright, that two were the ones he had followed the day before, and the other was made by Scalper Sam's large horse.

Pawnee Pete would have liked to have Dashing Charlie with him, but as he supposed he was back in camp he went on alone.

If he came upon the three men he would fight them, that was all.

If they ambushed him, then he would die as a brave Pawnee should.

He did not doubt but that Scalper Sam had overtaken his friends, or would soon do so, at the pace the tracks showed he was going.

Not having seen the two who rode the unshod ponies, he supposed that they were both Sioux, and longed to hang their scalps at his belt.

In the mean while Scalper Sam had overtaken the Indian and the renegade, for he had pressed his horse hard to do so.

He had met them by accident the day before, and knowing Bricktop, a fight had not followed as he was prepared for, but the two had ridden forward and shaken hands, the Sioux chief, who had been in the background, also coming forward.

"What brings you back to us, Sam?" asked Bricktop.

"Oh, I found it too hot for me in Texas, so came back to join Red Hair."

"Having grown my beard and long hair, nobody knew me, and as I have a fearful cold my voice has deepened to the tones of a fog-horn."

"But have you seen Dismal Dick?"

"No indeed."

"I sent him ahead, for I am playing scout now to a band of Rescuers under Captain Emmett, and they mean business."

"I forged letters from army officers I knew of in Texas, giving me a good name, and calling myself after a Texan I met there who was known as Scalper Sam."

"I told Dismal Dick to push ahead and warn Red Hair, for Captain Emmett is supported by three separate columns of soldiers."

"You don't mean it, Sam?"

"I do, so get back to the village and warn my pard, Red Hair, or he will be wiped out and all of us renegades with him."

"Tell him to get his picked warriors together and lead them to Castle Canyon, and I will guide the party into an ambush, but to shoot men, not horses, for the latter are valuable."

"Now go, Bricktop, for Chief Red Hair will have no more time than he needs."

"I'll be off at once, the chief and I."

With this they parted, and the conversation between them proves that Dashing Charlie was not wrong in setting Scalper Sam down as the man who had met Dismal Dick in the store in Omaha.

Then Scalper Sam had returned to the camp, and going to get his orders from Captain Emmett had overheard Charlie telling what he had seen.

Like a snake he glided away, mounted his horse and started for the Sioux camp, knowing that it would be sudden and certain death to him if he was taken.

He had pushed on so rapidly that he had overtaken the Sioux and the renegade just at dawn, and feeling then that he had a fighting chance

for life he had decided to halt to give the horses a good rest.

If pursued he did not expect pursuit to begin until morning, when his trail could be found, and that the Rescuers would be able to reach the Sioux camp within twenty-four hours after their arrival he did not consider possible.

So Scalper Sam halted to have his breakfast leisurely, and the horses were staked out for a good rest and feed.

Not expecting pursuers to come in sight for hours, they were considerably startled to hear the clatter of hoofs and at once sprung to cover, for to reach their horses was impossible.

The echoes among the rocks made the hoof-falls resound like the tramp of half a dozen horses, and they were glad to see but one horseman dash into view.

That horseman was Pawnee Pete.

He saw his mistake and quickly tried to rectify it, for he dropped from his horse at the crack of two rifles and a shot from a bow.

Instantly he ran to cover while his horse sunk dead in his tracks.

He had overtaken the three men, and now it was to be a fight for life.

The cover the Pawnee sought was a pile of rocks, and they were apart from others, so stood by themselves.

A convenient crevice gave him a shelter, and scrub bushes growing upon the rocks shielded his exact position from observation.

The Sioux chief had recognized a mutual foe in the Pawnee, and with a yell rushed to the attack.

He was brave, very brave, but foolish.

He saw his mistake when he rolled over on the ground with a broken leg.

He sought to roll back to cover, and Bricktop bravely made a rush to secure him; but Pawnee Pete was at bay now, his blood up, and he meant fight.

He chipped an ounce of flesh out of Bricktop's shoulder, and that renegade turned and fled for shelter, not caring to aid his red-skin friend.

And though the chief was a good roller, he had not had practice enough at that style of locomotion to make the best of time, so got another shot that stopped his rolling.

Pawnee Pete was now using his revolver, and as long as the Sioux chief was struggling he practiced upon him, each shot taking effect.

But he had become so interested in his own work that he forgot his safety, and was only reminded of it when his revolver dropped from his hand and his right arm fell to his side useless, for a shot from Scalper Sam had torn through the flesh and grazed the bone.

Pawnee Pete gave a yell of defiance and then lay low, nursing his bleeding arm and growing very weak from loss of blood.

He longed to get that Sioux scalp, and believing he would bleed to death, he determined to get the red trophy to carry with him to the happy hunting-grounds.

So he sprung from his cover with a yell and as he did so got another wound from Bricktop.

But it was the last that the renegade Bricktop ever fired, for there came the crack of a rifle from the canyon and the man fell dead, a bullet in his brain.

Scalper Sam heard the clatter of hoofs, saw Bricktop fall, beheld the horseman dash out of the canyon and turning fled like a deer toward his horse, which, fortunately for him was in the direction he wished to go.

His flight was concealed by some bushes, so he had mounted and was off just as he was discovered by Charlie Emmett who had fired the shot that had brought down Bricktop the renegade, thus saving Pawnee Pete's life.

While Girard the guide rode up to the wounded Pawnee, Charlie made a bold effort to overtake Scalper Sam.

But his horse had been too hard pressed and he dared not push him harder, while the rest enabled the renegade's steed to rapidly leave him behind.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE DASH OF THE RESCUERS.

WHEN Charlie Emmett found that he had to give up the chase of Scalper Sam, for the present at least, as his horse was used up, he returned to the vale where he feared he would find Pawnee Pete dead.

But Pawnee Pete was a tough one, and though twice wounded he had managed to reach the body of the Sioux chief.

Just as Girard the guide rode up Pawnee Pete scalped his foe in the most approved manner, and waved the red trophy around his head as he gave a wild triumphant war-cry.

Pawnee Pete was then tuning up for his death-song, when Girard said to him:

"Quiet that howling, Pete, for you are not going to die."

"Pete glad; but heap hurt," was the cool reply.

"I'll fix you up in no time," and the guide set to work to keep his promise.

He had been a medical student in his earlier days, and his great practice with the worst of wounds had made of him a skillful surgeon, as he soon proved to the Pawnee.

When Charlie Emmett came back, leading his tired horse, he found Girard just finishing dressing the Pawnee's wounds.

"Is he much hurt, Girard?"

"Not seriously, Charlie."

"Good! How are you, old Pete, and what made you such a fool as to fight the three of them?"

"Pete heap fool, but got Sioux chief's scalp."

"You bet you did, and you came pretty near losing your own; but you are a dandy, Pete, and will be as good as new before long."

"Your horse is dead, I see, but you can have your choice of Bricktop's or the Sioux."

"Charlie good, heap good."

"He save Pete from die."

"I got in a little lead, Pete, just in time; but what is to be done now, Girard?"

"We can only go into camp up the canyon and wait for the men to come."

"I will put Pete on my horse, while you bring the Sioux and Bricktop's animals, and have a look at the latter gentleman's belongings, for he may have something valuable about him."

"The rest will do our horses good too."

"Yes, but if I know my uncle they won't have very long to rest, for he'll come on for all the stock can do."

"In that case we will crowd in pretty close on the heels of Scalper Sam, for his horse is dead beat."

"Not quite so bad as ours."

"He was pushing his for his life, you yours only to take his life, and that made a great difference, Charlie."

"That might be," and Dashing Charlie led the three horses up the canyon and staked them out.

Then he took a look at the body of the Sioux chief and turned from that to Bricktop.

"Well, I am avenged, I suppose, and his deviltry has ended," he said to himself.

"Well, Charlie, what did you find?"

"I have not searched his body—I could not," and Charlie turned to the guide who just then came up.

"Well, I'll do it," and Girard did so, but found nothing of value other than a few dollars in silver.

"We must bury them, Girard."

"If you say so, Charlie."

"They are human beings you know."

"Oh, yes, that renegade is, *now he is dead*; but before he was a wild beast."

"I regard the red-skins far more highly."

They were very tired, but they dug graves for the dead renegade and Indian, and placed them in it.

Then they went back to Pawnee Pete and had breakfast, after which they rested.

Several hours thus passed away and then came the rumble of many hoofs in the canyon.

"The Rescuers!" cried Charlie.

"Yes, for those are iron hoofs."

"At first I feared they were Sioux."

Soon the head of the column appeared in sight and a cheer was given as Charlie stepped forward and waved his sombrero.

The horses were gaunt and tired, the men haggard looking; but they were full of fight and were eager to press on when they heard the story of the pursuit and the fight in the vale.

But Captain Emmett knew that his men and horses must have rest, so he went into camp, and there remained for several hours.

Pawnee Pete said he could stand the pain if they would take him on to fight the Sioux, and once more the Rescuers moved on to the attack.

At last they reached the first sight of the Sioux village, just one hour behind Scalper Sam, whose horse had died on the trail and thus forced him to walk the rest of the way.

All was excitement in the Indian village, though the Rescuers were not expected to be so near at hand, and a perfect reign of terror followed when with wild cries and a revolver in each hand the gallant men made their irresistible dash upon the red-skins.

Chiefs and braves fell dead on all sides, some women and children were killed in the mad onslaught, and a stream of wild humanity fled to the shelter of the mountains.

The white captives were found and hastily

taken to the rear support, and the mad fight went on, until at last the warriors rallied in large numbers, scores were coming in from the hunt and neighboring tepees and the Rescuers were obliged to fall back rapidly.

Back through the wrecked Sioux village they went until a wild cry went up:

"Where is Dashing Charlie?"

"See! he has been captured!"

CHAPTER XXXII.

CAPTIVES.

"HALT! follow me, men, to rescue that boy!" The command came from Captain Emmett, and his retreating force halted.

Then Dr. Chalmers spurred to his side and a few others followed.

Charlie Emmett had been a hero in the fight, and he had seemed to bear a charmed life.

But he had caught sight of Scalper Sam and had made a dash for him, his horse had been wounded and he became a prisoner, for the loud command of Chief Red Hair ordered his braves not to harm the boy.

With a wild yell Captain Emmett led his few followers to the rescue, but in vain.

Night was settling down now, and the Indians were regaining their courage and thirsting with revenge.

Dr. Chalmers and several of the men fought their way back to their lines, but Captain Emmett's horse fell dead and some one called out that he too was killed.

Back from the village sullenly surged the Rescuers, bearing in their midst a score of white captives, women and children, whom they had rescued, and their wounded as well.

They fought inch by inch their way, and held at bay the horde of red demons that crowded them.

The reserve, with the pack-horses, came up and aided greatly, for the Indians knew not their number.

At last the band of heroes, under Dr. Chalmers's command, now reached a spot where they could make a stand.

They did so, and stood at bay against ten times their number.

Through the long hours of the night they beat back their foes in their mad charges upon their position, and just at dawn came ringing cheers and a squadron of cavalry dashed up to the rescue.

Their horses were worn out, but their presence was felt, and soon after came two twelve pounders thundering into action.

They were unlimbered quickly, and the roar of the artillery sounded among the rocks, making a thousand echoes.

The mounted infantry had arrived now, and the men sprung from their horses, and accustomed to foot exercise, they rushed to the front like an avalanche.

And back before the gallant soldiers, who had so nobly pressed on to the rescue of the Rescuers, the Sioux were driven in mad flight, beaten, through their village, which was given to the flames, while their horses by the hundred fell into the hands of the victors.

The next morning not an Indian was in sight that was not dead or wounded, and the ground was strewn thick with them.

The soldiers held the field, and the Rescuers were searching to see if the body of Captain Emmett, or that of Dashing Charlie could be found.

But in vain the search, for nowhere could they be seen, and so it was that the gallant captain and his brave young nephew were left in the hands of the Sioux, but whether dead or alive their comrades could not tell.

The rescued captives were taken back with the command, which retreated at once, for they were not strong enough to resist the force which could be brought against them did they remain a few days in the mountainous country of the Sioux.

Back to Omaha went the Rescuers, and when asked about their leader and Dashing Charlie, they could only say:

"We left them captives to the Sioux."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

CONCLUSION.

PAWNEE PETE's wounds healed rapidly. Perhaps it was the balm he received from having scalped half a dozen Sioux on the day of the fight, for he would go into battle on horseback, and perhaps his thirst to avenge Captain Emmett and Dashing Charlie; but cer-

tain it is that he rapidly recovered and avowed his determination to rescue his white brothers if still alive.

If dead he meant to take a revenge that would raise a wail in the whole Sioux nation, he said.

Girard, the guide, had also been wounded, yet slightly, and though Doctor Chalmers had received a couple of arrow cuts he did not neglect the wounded Rescuers and soldiers.

He seemed very moody after his return and rode over to the fort to see Colonel Sibley, who had been a brother officer of his when he was in the army.

He found the colonel in a state of mind that was not amiable.

"You are just in time, Chalmers, to see an execution," said Colonel Sibley.

"An execution, colonel?"

"Yes."

"Some poor devil of a deserter, or one who showed the white feather in action, I suppose."

"No, indeed, Chalmers, it is that accursed renegade who calls himself Dismal Dick."

"Ah! I remember him now, the one Pawnee Pete brought to you?"

"The same, and that brave Pawnee Indian shall be his heir, for I have here the fellow's horses, pack and all his belongings."

"Will you see that he gets them?"

"Certainly, colonel; but will you execute the man?"

"Certainly, for I have here the proofs of his guilt, and this turning renegade must be stopped."

"Come, for it is the hour appointed for him to die, and I wish you as a witness."

"Certainly, Colonel Sibley," and Dr. Chalmers accompanied the colonel out to the parade ground, where the force in the fort was drawn up to witness the execution.

It was a solemn scene, and yet little sympathy was bestowed upon the white man who had turned renegade, and had sought to destroy his own comrades.

Out came Dismal Dick, looking even more dismal than was his wont, if that was possible, and he was white with fear.

He begged piteously for his life, but no mercy was shown him, and the crack of the rifles ended his guilty career forever.

"Now poor Emmett and his brave boy are partly avenged, Chalmers," said the colonel.

"It was to speak to you of them, colonel, that I came to-day."

"Ah! have you news of them?"

"Indirectly, sir, I have learned that they are captives of the Sioux, and you know that the renegades Red Hair and Scalper Sam are chiefs among them."

"True, but what can be done, for I have no more men than are needed to protect the border, not to invade the Indian country."

"I got a severe reprimand from the general commanding the department, for sending a force to support Emmett, but I know that he merely passed the compliment from the Secretary of War, from whom he caught blazes, and that gentleman doubtless got his cue from a scolding given him by the President, who was attacked by a lot of old fools who think that it is nothing to kill a soldier, only don't hurt the poor Indian."

"I tell you, Chalmers, I am sick of this being ruled at Washington by cant."

"If I was allowed the right and given the men, I would stop Indian wars for all time to come."

"I believe you, Colonel Sibley," answered Dr. Chalmers, and he rode slowly back to his home, mourning the loss of his partner and friend, and of the gallant boy whom he had learned to love as his own.

But the rumor that Captain Emmett and Charlie were captives to the Sioux proved true, for Red Hair held them as prisoners.

And, but for their being protected by Singing Dove, the beautiful Sioux Queen, what their fate would have been the reader can readily guess.

But she protected them, and for a year they remained captives of the Sioux, before an opportunity at last presented itself for them to make their escape, which they did with the aid of the Singing Dove, who fled with them as the bride of the gallant captain.

THE END.

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